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Vol. CLXXIX No 7341 WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC DECEMBER 2 1944

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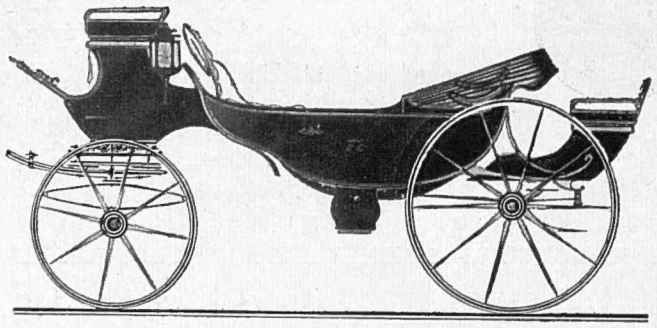

Open barouche by Thrupp

Volume CLXXIX No. 2341 The SPHERE, London, December 2, 1944

THE SPHERE

With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"

The Empire's Illustrated Weekly

HOW THE "GAP" WAS CLOSED AT FALAISE, WHERE MAJOR D. V. CURRIE WON THE VICTORIA CROSS. The scene at St. Lambert-sur-Dives, where a handful of Canadians held the "gap" while the German armies trapped in the pocket were destroyed. This picture was taken in August 1944, and shows a German captain and some of his men surrendering in the village to the Canadians

During the battles in Normandy in August 1944, the Allied Armies closed round the Germans in the neighbourhood of Falaise and set about the task of destroying the enemy. To do this, the "gap" was closed at Falaise, and was held against all German attempts to escape. This task was carried out by Major David Vivian Currie, of the South Alberta Regiment, Canadian Armoured Corps, who has been awarded the Victoria Cross. On August 18 he was sent with his small mixed force of Canadian tanks, self-propelled anti-tank guns, and infantry to cut an escape route from the pocket. The force was held up by strong enemy resistance at St. Lambert-sur-Dives; so Major Currie entered the village alone on foot, to reconnoitre. Early next morning he led an attack against enemy tanks, guns and infantry, and by noon had seized and consolidated a position half-way inside the village. During the next thirty-six hours the Germans hurled in one counter-attack after another against Major Currie's little force: at dusk on August 20 the final German assault was routed. Promptly ordering his men to advance, Major Currie then completed the capture of the village and the remnants of the two German armies in the pocket were cut off. For three days and nights of fierce fighting the Canadian force held out: all the officers were killed or wounded

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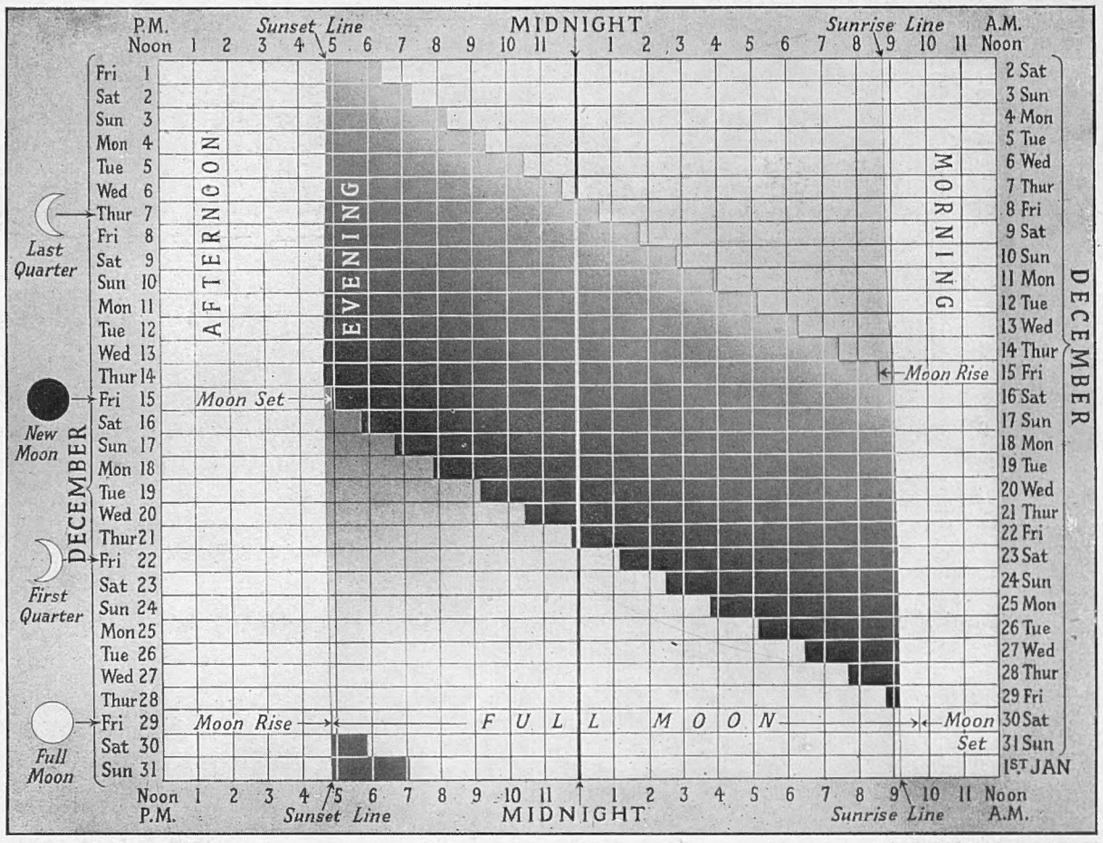
A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 274

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

Barbarian Enemies.—The horrors of war are unspeakable enough under the best conditions and humane conventions. Those horrors are quadrupled for the Allies, fighting as they are against barbarians. It was a bitter necessity thrust upon the War Minister to announce in Parliament details of the atrocities committed by the Japanese upon a large number of British and Australian prisoners of war. Although Sir James Grigg was able to qualify in some sort and localise these unspeakable outrages, his announcement could not fail to strike a chill at the hearts of all who have relations and friends in Japanese power. And for all the Allies, personally or indirectly concerned, the new realisation of the ruthless savagery of our enemies towards brave men in their power brings an access of rage and grief which our present impotence raises to white heat. The Japanese, for all their thin veneer of Western civilisation, sometimes affected before this war, were never anything but savages. The Germans in the past have been in a different category. And even to-day, unspeakable as are, and have been, the atrocities against humanity which the Nazis commit wherever it serves their purpose, all sense and sanity urge that we should speak with discrimination and continue to localise and identify their crimes, if only for the peace of mind of all Allied people who have personal ties with P.O.Ws. Conditions in P.O.W. camps in Germany always are, and must be, hard, but they are not everywhere intolerable. We cannot and must not brand all these camps in the Reich as torture camps, for there is clear evidence that they are not so, generally. The indescriminate branding of every German as a potential torturer leaves us no epithet strong enough to condemn the ruthless savagery of our totally barbarian enemy Japan. It is absolutely vital that we should spare no opportunity still to encourage humanity and decency among our enemies, and we cannot succeed in this essential purpose if we wildly and indescriminately brand all P.O.W. establishments without distinction or qualification.

Relentless Pressure.—In the West, seven Allied armies are battering at the gates of the Reich, with a relentlessness matched only by the weather of an unspeakable autumn. And that weather—for what it be worth—seems to be even more relentless in England than on the Reich borders. In the face of the obstacles of nature and military science, the Western Allies drive on and gain valuable ground and inflict ever more severe punishment on an enemy which, still strong, has now no policy but to delay inevitable and irretrievable defeat. In Italy, it is the same story. In the Balkans, events move more rapidly than we sometimes realise. On the long Russian front, if the fall of Budapest is delayed beyond expectation, the submission of Hungary is daily brought nearer. Northwards on several vital fronts progress is slower, but the Russians hold strongly and edge forward, from Norway to Poland, and wait on the hardening of winter and the completion of build-ups to resume the initiative along the whole vast front. The united resolve and policy of the Allies are very clear. Pressure on the enemy is never and nowhere to be released. Germany must buy time at a price she cannot longer afford to pay. The tide of retribution is pressing on the dykes at last and the day cannot be far distant when the dykes will burst. In the mud and darkness and horror of this hour, "the last great battle in the West" is now being fought out. And there, as in the snows and bitter winds on the eastern borders of the Reich, it is the last ounce of weight which will decide an issue which civilisation cannot afford to delay.



"THE SPHERE" MOONLIGHT CHART FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, showing the period of no moonlight and the period when the moon will be at its full

A limited number of these charts will be supplied free of charge on application to the Publisher, "The Sphere," Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, W.C.1, but 2½d. in stamps must be enclosed with the application

Three a Penny.—If the urgent demands of reformers, and other persons specially concerned with this or that aspect of national affairs, are not checked and negatived with determination, I can clearly see a not-distant day when Whitehall will cover the present space of inner London and there will be a Minister for practically everything. And a new Minister means a new Ministry. No Minister can work alone in a room in another department. He needs permanent officials to put him right and keep him right, and all the hierarchy of typists and filing clerks and secretaries and Parliamentary secretaries and tea-makers and commissionaires. The cry is urgent to-day for the control of bureaucracy. It is drowned by the counter-cries of fanatics for more and more bureaucracy. There must be a special Minister for prisoners-of-war, for rural amenities, for tourist facilities, for beer, for skittles, for soap and for sealing-wax. I can clearly see the day when all the members of the party in power sit on the Front Bench; and note should certainly be taken of the probability in the plans for the new Tudor model of the House of Commons. Back benches, as well as draughts and miasmas, must be eliminated, and the supply of Ministerial rooms must be trebled for safety. If there is an element of comedy in this strophe and antistrophe on the subject of bureaucracy, at least it underlies the vastness and complexity of modern problems of Government, post-war and during a violent revolution. But violent as is our social revolution, it has not upset the soundness of our age-old nursery saws. Still as of old, too many cooks spoil the broth. And still as of old, when Ministers of State are three a penny, the state of Ministers declines in importance.

In Search of Merit.—Whether it be a case of cause and effect, or merely a periodic and haphazard state of things, I do not know; but I fancy that it is a problem to-day to find sufficient merit among public men and women to fill the posts of honour, and to wear the rewards of chief distinction which are open to distinguished citizens. Outstanding figures in public life are at all times rare. It may be that the many new posts which the war and the requirements of a better world have already created, have already used up our necessarily limited stocks of accepted merit. It is perhaps more likely that a big proportion of available merit is now engaged in other tasks in foreign fields. Again, it may be that the range and diversity of distinctions—garters, ribbons, orders and rewards—are now an embarrassment, and require to be reconsidered and adjusted to suit an era more truly democratic than those for which they were created. The fact remains that it is not always easy to find universally accepted candidates to replenish the chief orders of merit (or "no damned merit"), as vacancies occur, among men or women. It may well be that the average standard of efficiency among public men and in the arts and sciences generally is higher than it was. Indeed, I am sure it is. But still as of old, outstanding merit is *rara avis*, and it is to be remembered, so far as concerns rewards and distinctions, as opposed to place and power, that many of these awards were designed for and accorded to a small class of Privilege in days when Privilege was accepted as an inevitable, if not as a fitting, condition of our tradition and state as a nation. But the age of Privilege is dead (or dying?) now, and the work for which such rewards to-day can be justified is enormously more onerous and calls for merit from a wider class.

Vituperation.—The correspondence column of *The Times* is famous, and has for generations been famous, as a forum for the ventilation of public opinion on questions of the hour; and, as such, it is a valuable source of information to historians and social historians. Dignity, reason, the conventional courtesies and fair-minded impartiality have been the guiding principles of editorship and selection, and, therefore, of composition by correspondents. In *The Times* of November 19—almost for the first time in my memory—I observed a lapse from those high standards. On that day appeared what (I hoped) were the last shots in the scrimmages captioned "Foreign Affairs" and "A Service Club Sign." I confess that both these wordy battles have sometimes attained to unedifying degrees of bitterness and of the schoolboy technique of "Tu quoque!" Indeed, I should put Lord Vansittart's riposte of November 19 in *The Times* as an example, as rare as deplorable, of how *not* to "write to *The Times* about it." The historian and social historian of to-morrow will turn back the dusty files in search of truth for his history of our times, and I think his cool head will discover—what our hot and tired brains do not to-day fully appreciate—how the inexorable curses of war are working inevitably out, how hate breeds hate, how fruitful is the soil in which the Dragon's teeth have been sown, and how very necessary it is that public men and private citizens alike should resist by all means still in their power the use of barbs and blunt instruments. Euphemite, o politai (*ευφεμιτε, ὦ πολιται*)—it *may* be necessary to wage war with these weapons, but we shall never make a decent and lasting peace by their use. And (as I have ventured to say before now) you can't switch in a moment and at will from hate to brotherly love.

Rainfall.—In the first six months of this year, 1944, I measured 8·19 in. rainfall—the lowest in my records. The total for the year (to November 23) now stands at 24·49, still well below the local average of a year. The work of replenishing the wells has largely "fallen" on October and November, which have produced to this date 10·03 in. between them, an autumn fall above the average. In 1943 at this same date the figures stood thus: First six months, 16·85; total for year to November 23, 28·78. Of this total, October gave 3·41 and November (to 23rd) 1·82. The full total of 1943 was 32·13, well below the average of the past 10 years. It is unlikely to be exceeded by 1944. It certainly looks as if Jupiter Pluvius will make the effort, but I cannot believe he will succeed in squeezing out another 8 in. on our sodden heritage between now and December 31. October and November 1944 have a right to keep for a time their unenviable record of clammy and dingy nastiness.

THE OLD STAGER

THE BRITISH ADVANCE AGAINST THE GERMANS IN THE BEND OF THE MAAS RIVER : Along the banks of the Deurne Canal as troops and anti-tank guns move on past enemy obstacles

The Second Army's operation to secure the area within the bend of the Maas west of Venlo is going steadily forward in hazardous and difficult circumstances. Mines and mud are the main obstacles. The hamlet of America, east of Griendtsvern on the Helmond-Venlo railway, was reached on November 23. This and other photographs given here were taken during this advance and give an idea of some of the conditions faced. Besides having to contend with the weather, traffic to the advanced positions had to overcome obstacles and mines on the railway track

Dogs were employed to detect German mines on the track

THE ADVANCE TOWARDS VENLO

And the Fierce Fighting in the Bend of the Maas River

—The Latest Pictures from Holland

ON THE ROAD TO VENLO : After the mines are removed and craters filled in, British troops move forward in a long line of Kangaroos, the special tanks used for troop-carrying

BRITISH INFANTRY ON A CHURCHILL TANK RIDING TOWARDS VENLO : These men advanced east of Beringe, along the Beringe-Halden road, in their drive towards the important communications centre and "fortress town" of Venlo. When this picture was taken, they were some two miles from their objective

THE AMERICANS ENTER WRECKED HAMICH : Armour and vehicles coming into the town are temporarily halted by debris strewn across the streets. The road was soon cleared, however, and the advance towards Cologne continued

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES removed by British sappers from the road leading into Venlo. Great numbers of these were sown by the retreating Germans

FRONT LINE IN THE MAAS BEND : For sixteen days in one sector near Venlo British infantry held the lines against German patrols. They were forced to dig themselves in and made trenches in the front line, where they then lived and fought. Gradually, the German pocket to the west of the Maas was then cleared up

THE SECOND ARMY "BITES" INTO GERMANY

And Fights Side by Side with the Ninth Army into Geilenkirchen

—New Photographs from the Region North of Aachen

The attack of the Second Army through Geilenkirchen was part of a vast offensive carried out by six Allied Armies along the 400-mile front from Holland to the Alps, to burst open the gates of Germany by forcing a way through the Siegfried Line. At dawn on November 18, General Dempsey's army, in co-operation with the American Ninth Army, made their first major penetration into Germany, thrusting forward to Geilenkirchen, which was heavily defended by concrete strong-points and which actually formed part of the much-vaunted Line. If fell at noon on the following day, and was followed by a series of resounding successes from other parts of the 400-mile-long front.

The pictures we reproduce here all come from the area in which the Second Army operated during this phase of the offensive. Quite a number of German towns are now in Allied hands, and innumerable villages: in some of them the Allied Military Government have already taken over the control of those civilians who remain in the districts now in our occupation

105-MM. MOBILE HOWITZERS OF AN AMERICAN ARMOURED DIVISION passing through German allotments near the town of Palenberg. These big artillery pieces carry their own camouflage strung out on steel rods

AMERICANS OF THE NINTH ARMY RODE INTO BATTLE ON BRITISH TANKS, FIGHTING SIDE BY SIDE AND SUPPORTING EACH OTHER. The town of Geilenkirchen itself was captured by the British at 10 p.m. on Sunday, November 18, and here some of the Americans are ploughing through the muddy streets in the wake of the forward elements. The bombardment preceding the infantry assault had been concentrated on the enemy's forward positions and also on the crossroads and villages some miles to his rear, thus checking the forward movement of the German reserves. Our losses were negligible, but several hundred prisoners (mostly Austrians) were rounded-up within the first twenty-four hours. Geilenkirchen lies to the north of Aachen, between Maastricht and Cologne: it is one of a series of towns and villages which had been converted into strong-points and fortresses by the Germans

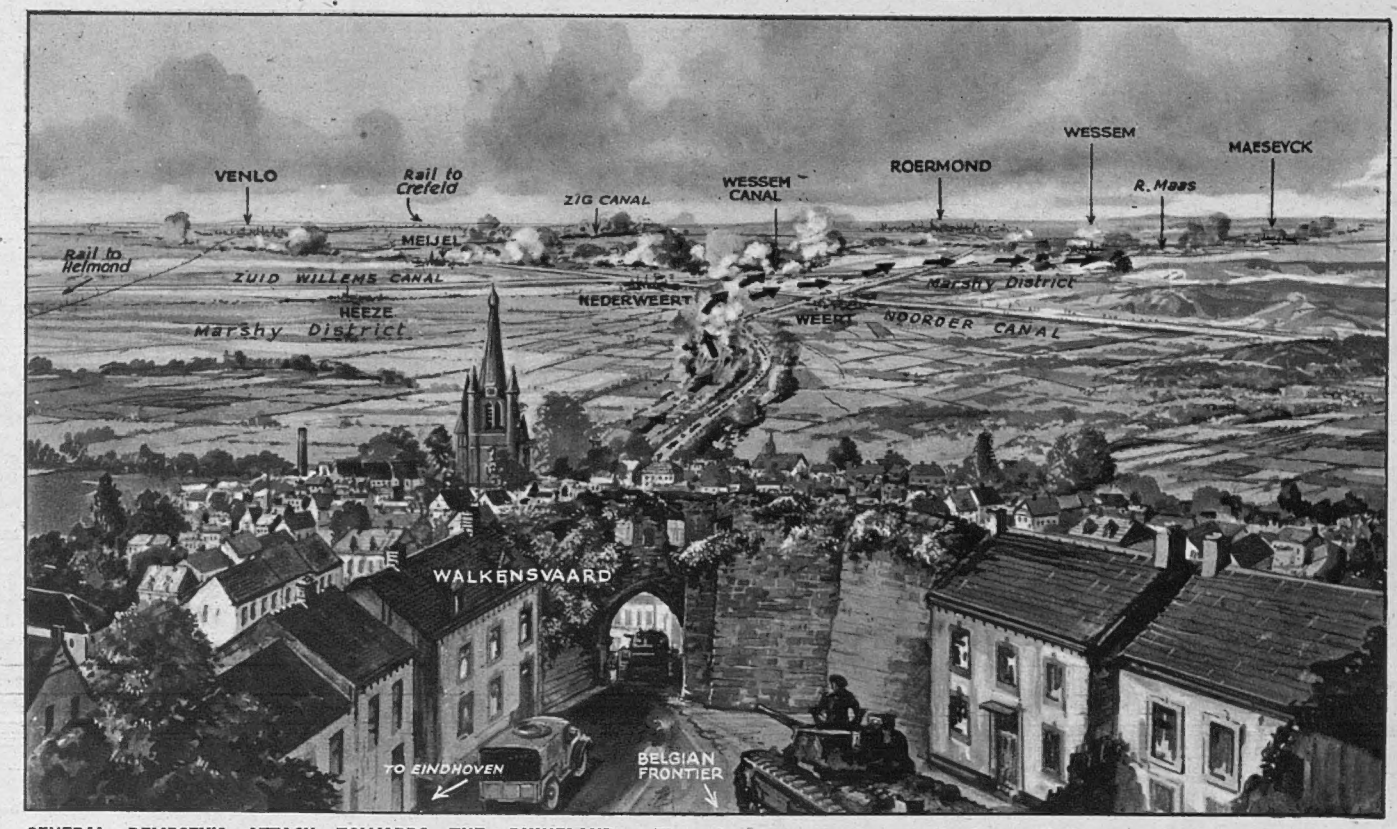
AMERICAN INFANTRYMEN MOPPING UP IN GEILENKIRCHEN, THE GERMAN TOWN TAKEN IN A JOINT ACTION BY THE BRITISH SECOND AND AMERICAN NINTH ARMIES. There were formerly 20,000 inhabitants, but only 300 remained to witness the Allied entry. The houses are mostly empty, with all their windows smashed as a result of the heavy artillery bombardments. The actual capture of the town was really a mopping-up operation: the day preceding its fall, British and American troops drove deep penetrations to the north and south of Geilenkirchen, and then turned inwards to complete their task. Many villages and small towns lying in their path were captured during the course of the same operation

BRITISH BREN-GUN CARRIERS PASSING THROUGH THE ALMOST-VANISHED GERMAN VILLAGE OF BAUCHEM. Only the shattered walls of a few houses still stand, as a result of the pounding received by the village during the advance of the British Second Army. Not a civilian is visible in this picture as the Bren-gun carriers move up towards the fighting line along the wide road. Bauchem lies just to the west of the River Maas, on the opposite bank of which is Roermond, towards which one wing of the Allied attack was being directed

The ALLIES ADVANCE TOWARDS GERMANY

Pictures of the Roermond and Thionville Sectors

This section of the combined assault on the Western Front was made towards the frontier between Venlo and Roermond. Parallel with this line runs the now famous Eindhoven Road; and on it, opposite Meijel and the main canal obstacles which had to be overcome, lies the Dutch town of Walkensvaard. The several crossings over the Noorden Canal and the Wessem Canal were soon merged into bigger bridgeheads. An important intersection point at Weert was captured and advances made along the Zig Canal. The Germans retired from Meijel after leaving numbers of booby-traps behind them. The advance continued eastwards towards Venlo.



GENERAL DEMPSEY'S ATTACK TOWARDS THE RHINELAND: The thrust over the canals from Walkensvaard towards Roermond. This little village (captured during the first days of the advance into Holland) was a focal point for the Allied forces

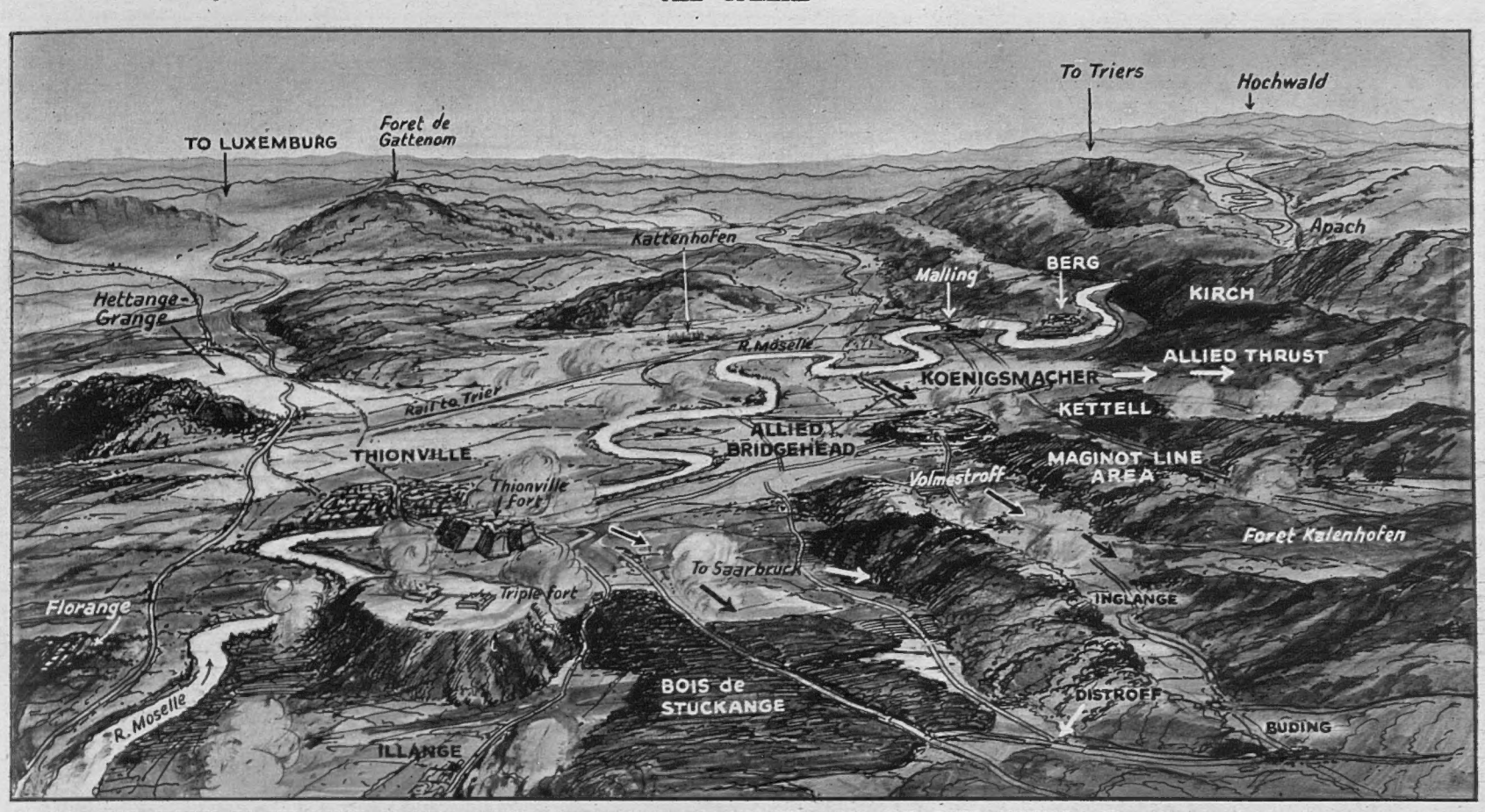
—Drawing by E. G. Lambert

DEEPER INTO THE REICH: American soldiers searching a German pill-box in No Man's Land on the outskirts of Geilenkirchen. This had been blown up by U.S. Engineers and was a mass of broken concrete and tangled steel. The town itself was reduced to a mass of ruins after the heavy fighting

A TANK-DESTROYER DIGS IN IN THE SIEGFRIED LINE: This big vehicle of destructive hitting power was operated by the men of a U.S. armoured division. It was sunk hull down within the Siegfried Line outside Geilenkirchen

THE KNIGHTS-ERRANT: An episode during the fighting near Zoon-op-Zand, when British armoured car men attacked the Germans in a Dutch house—*Drawing by Roland Davies.* A young Dutch girl had come tearfully to the battle H.Q. of an armoured car commander with a stammered story of how the Germans had taken her father away from their little home in the woods, and that some of the Nazi thugs were still in the house. The commander asked permission to go and investigate. "When we reached the house," he reported later, "I stopped the armoured car and three of us went forward to reconnoitre while the gunner remained to give covering fire. When I reached the back of the house, a Boche came out from behind a wood-pile with a rifle at the firing position. One of the men let him have a burst from his Sten gun. The Boche dropped, but wriggled back. He opened fire, and another Boche joined in from the house; and we had a little battle for a quarter of an hour." At least three of the enemy were killed before the "revenge party" returned to their headquarters

BRITISH TROOPS DRIVE INTO GERMANY ON TANKS: The first British offensive on German soil started at dawn on November 18, when General Dempsey's British Second Army opened a new attack in the Geilenkirchen sector, north of Aachen. This is the British Second Army's first major penetration into Germany. The picture above was taken during the start of the offensive in which, at one point, British troops fought their way forward to within 1,000 yards of Geilenkirchen itself during the first phase of the advance. Not long afterwards, the town was captured, and further advances were then made in the direction of Cologne and the river Rhine



THE U.S. ARMY STRIKES TO THE NORTH OF METZ, WHERE THE MAGINOT LINE MARCHES WITH THE RIVER MOSELLE. The capture of the important town of Thionville, and of the Fortress of Konigsmacher, where a bridgehead over the river was formed—*Drawing by Percy Home*

It was in the closing days of October that the Germans made the announcement that Allied activity was taking place in the Thionville district. When all was again ready, a forward movement was made in the early days of November. Half the town of Thionville had then been in American hands for the previous two months; now an assault was made on the fort. This soon fell, and U.S. troops were then across the Moselle and faced with a section of the Maginot Line. Eight miles to the north-east, the town of Berg was freed, lying in a loop of the river between Konigsmacher and Kettell. The former is a strong fortification linked up with the Maginot Line. From here southward to Thionville a bridgehead was steadily developing, with the Germans counter-attacking from Kerling in high forest country. South of the town, a small cluster of forts at Illange, flanked by forest patches, fell to the advancing forces, and the Konigsmacher-Valmestroff bridgehead was expanded to meet the one formed a few miles upstream at Uckange. At Floranges, on the extreme left of the view given here, was a big hidden factory for flying bombs and Messerschmitt parts, run with women slave labour. There was no sign of air attack nearer than a mile away, so well camouflaged was the place

OFFICERS OF THE U.S. ARMY WHO LED THE ASSAULT ON THE KONIGSMACHER FORT examine the defences after the place had fallen. The American troops had to blow down the heavy doors of the fort with explosive charges before they were able to penetrate the interior and deal with the German garrison within

THE ENTRANCE TO THE KONIGSMACHER FORT after its final capture. It is in the Thionville area, guarding the approaches to the great fortress of Metz

A LINE OF SHIPS' PROPELLERS CAPTURED AT KONIGSMACHER. From these and other evidences it is presumed that the district had been used for the manufacture or storage of articles for naval use. But why, is still a mystery

AN OFFICER WHO LED A RAIDING PARTY AT KONIGSMACHER goes over the communication trenches linking up the outside defence posts of the fort. A dead Nazi is lying at the entrance to one of the trenches

FORGOTTEN LITTLE FRONTS ROUND FRANCE

Where the Germans are Still Holding Out all Round the Coast and where Guerillas are Occupying the Pyrenees

Described by FERDINAND TUOHY

IF a handful of bandits or malcontents had barricaded themselves in peacetime in a French port, scores of special correspondents would descend on the spot and cable tens of thousands of words daily. To-day, sieges a thousand times bigger go unrecorded. The gigantic struggle on the Rhine obliterates them. Yet, if we recover proportion, what "stories" these forgotten little fronts intrinsically are!

The Germans are still 40 miles from England, at Dunkirk. This has been called the "dog-in-the-manger front." But, from the German point of view, it denies us opportunity to set this fifth port of France going again, and it keeps from the real front an encircling force given as 12,000 Czechs. The German garrison may number as many, a tough hotchpotch of naval units, marines, parachutists, army gunners, shock troops and specialists. The perimeter must be fairly wide, as the besieged are out in the canal-crossed fields, getting in supplies. They keep contact with Germany by aircraft, radio and letter post. One incoming mail was dropped on the Czechs, who have been reading letters through the loudspeakers.

Nearly all the civilian population was evacuated, so it is strictly a military affair. Operational staff, supplies and munitions have been dropped by night—the last probably of the wrecking variety. Hitler or Himmler expects Dunkirk to be as ruined as Rotterdam before the inevitable. But mounting an assault sufficiently extensive to succeed would be playing the German game, heavy losses aside.

AFTER THE WAR HAD PASSED BY THE CHANNEL PORTS—a picture taken from the lighthouse at Calais, showing the scene of desolation around the docks and harbour after the surrender of the German garrison on September 30

BOULOGNE HARBOUR HAS SUFFERED AN EVEN WORSE FATE THAN THAT OF CALAIS. All organised resistance by the Germans came to an end here on the afternoon of September 22. Repair gangs are now at work to get the docks into working order once again

Calls to surrender are answered contemptuously. That conjures another reason why the garrison is hanging on. In Germany, it is trumpeted as an heroic "Tobruk" garrison. All these besieged Nazis we shall come upon are being used to bolster home morale.

Over 250 miles down Channel the Germans are on. Alderney, Sark, Guernsey and Jersey—as far as their invasion of Britain got. After graciously moving on from a diddled and lassoed France Hitler meant to hold the Channel Islands permanently as a pistol or, shall we say, a V-weapon base aimed at England in case we started any tricks. That explains the exceptional defences, including underground forts. Surrounded by rocks and reefs, beaches mined, every approach closely covered by batteries, landing-places bristling with A.-A. guns, the German commander on the islands said in as many words "come and get us" to a Canadian Major who wished to parley.

Alderney's 1,500 left in June 1940. Over half of semi-feudal little Sark's 500 inhabitants remain. Practically all the 60,000 Channel Islanders who stayed on are in Jersey and Guernsey—most of the 2,000 taken to Germany hailed from the latter, more Anglicised isle. Only heavy batteries on Alderney, which can reach Cherbourg, have been attacked.

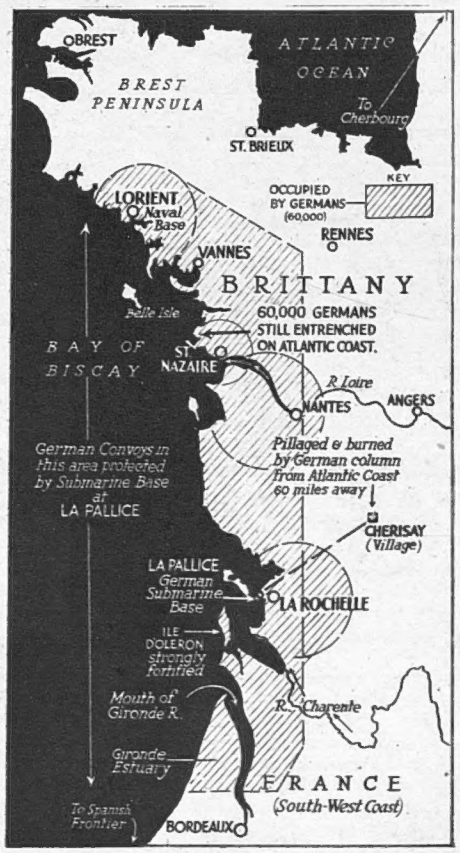
The islanders must stick it—how long more? They are running out of staples rated as imperative in Britain. Can anything be, is anything being, dropped on them? They know what an assault would mean and assuredly prefer to wait. The Germans, maybe in the strength of a division of 8,000 of the usual hotchpotch plus several thousand foreign Todt workers, are believed to be behaving well enough. And, as things stand at present, the German commander intends to stay until he has "satisfied Prussian military honour."

No news of any kind has come out of Ushant, that foggy, rock-infested island 15 miles off the Bréton tip, so one presumes the Germans are still there. They had fortified it, as it was of use to them in their Western Approaches warfare, and to stop us taking it. Ushant was principally a meteorological, lighthouse, radio and fishing centre. A bleak, stormy, cut-off spot, some of Ushant's fisherfolk of both sexes still wore their black hair in locks when I called in 1925.

Turning into the Bay of Biscay, we come to situations of rather more than nuisance value to the Germans. Lorient, much blasted U-boat base, is one of several places where the Germans are holding out 500 miles from the main battle front—a state of affairs hard to match in military annals. It is thought that up to 20,000 Germans, many from the naval services, are surrounded at Lorient, but at a distance, by commandos of ill-clad, ill-armed, ill-nourished F.F.I. and less regular Maquis. There is Allied representation, but the local Comité de Libération has a big say-so. The garrison raids quite a way for food, though it hasn't to nourish more than a couple of thousand civilian immovables in this once flourishing port on which Darlan spent so much talent and money.

In over-all command is Artillery-General Fahrmbacher, who says it's useless to approach him. He has the mauled Twenty-fifth Infantry Corps, and directs operations from a "thousand-man bunker," an elaborated fortification said to be poised on a shock-absorbing spring! Rear-Admiral Kaehler, who got away from Brest, seconds Fahrmbacher, and the sailor still contrives coastal relations with Nazi-held ports to the south. There are many Todt and Spanish auxiliaries in Lorient, which may well be the hardest nut of all to crack. Topographically the deuce to assail, as well as a great weight of dual-purpose artillery, it has naval guns of divers calibres in concrete emplacements, including monsters of 340 mm.

The Glénans Islands and Groix used to be part of the Lorient command—the French Navy held its trials between the two—and it would be odd if Kaehler had left them open to Allied landing-parties. Nor has there been a word about Belle-Isle, formidable and handsome island bigger than



SIXTY THOUSAND GERMANS STILL IN FRANCE, entrenched along the Atlantic coast and in possession of all the ports from Lorient down to the Gironde

Guernsey, and, like it, a holiday resort. The old fortress of Le Palais became a Borstal, but guns placed in it would command the only port, and so much else is cliffs.

And so to St. Nazaire and the mouth of the Loire, more particularly the Guérande peninsula, on which is once-smart La Baule and several other pine-shaded beaches, though I preferred the fishing ports of Batz and Le Croisic and the old walled town of Guérande. The Germans, under Parachute-General Junck, hold a strip 60 miles long by 40 miles deep, and the guess is that there are 20,000 of the usual mixed grill. Second in command is Rear-Admiral Mirew, whose Nazi fanaticism is as strong as Fahrmbacher's. The worst aspect is the piteous condition of the French civilians inside the pocket, though there cannot be anything like the 175,000 reported. French guerillas have been known to slip through the lines at night and meet their families. There's hardly any firing by day: merely at night, when the Germans too are out foraging.

The investing F.F.I. are helpless without artillery. Many are dressed in relays of German linen jackets, sandals and moth-eaten horizon-blue uniforms from the last war. The senior American officer responsible for operations here and up at Lorient holds a staff conference once a week, and needs five languages to speak to the "chieftains" who drop in on him from time to time. On the southern side of the Loire estuary is a composite German force of 10,000 (estimated) under Colonel Kaiserberg, though to what extent he actually commands the coast down towards La Rochelle is quite vague. He certainly holds Brévin, which, with St. Nazaire, opposite, closes the mouth of the Loire. Two more islands are involved in his stretch, Noirmoutier and Yeu, and somehow I fancy the Huns will not leave any islands until they have to. Some may even cling on even after a "cease fire" has been promulgated, contrary to the Nazi leaders' orders.

That adds to the interest surrounding La Rochelle, which is closed in by the islands of Ré and Oloron. The former, by the way, is so flat and windswept in winter that when donkeys were the only aids to locomotion, they wore gaiters. We are here inside the Pertuis (Solent), which, with La Pallice at one end, could yet harbour U-boats. Reports say the Germans have been reinforcing La Rochelle from north of the Loire. Previously, 18,000 men were holding out around the lovely old port, which, one hopes, may be spared destruction, and in the La Pallice U-boat base. Strong-points, manned by twenty men and heavily gunned and protected, surround each town.

The Nazis have been evacuating civilians from La Rochelle by arrangement with the F.F.I., but here a risk arises of them slipping in spies and wreckers, members of Darnand's former Militia. This is a growing danger in other parts of France too. Less than 5,000 of 37,000 Darnandists are accounted for, and it is known to be the Nazi intention to smuggle these traitors-and-murderers-without-hope so they may spy, wreck and assassinate. In fact, this is a forgotten front all on its own.

In the foothills of the Pyrenees is another kind of front—facing Franco, but nowhere near strong enough to do more than scratch him. The most battleworthy formation among the exiled Spanish Republicans is General Fernandez's 14,000 men, divided into ten commandos and armed with weapons dropped largely by the R.A.F.

Much has been heard of "anarchy" and "lawlessness" in the triangle Bordeaux-Toulouse-Marseille. The truth is that several brands of armed rover are circulating, not least Fifth Columnists posing as F.F.I. and out to discredit that force, and that the writ of the Provisional Government does not yet run everywhere against the ordinances of the local Committees of Liberation, which are very Left in texture, but include a growing number of priests.

Finally, it might be forgotten that the Germans still hold a line, or a series of positions, running down through the Alps from the Swiss border to east of Mentone. At the northernmost end martial law has been proclaimed in High Savoy, consequent upon grave incidents provoked by Vichy "militiamen" who infiltrated into the F.F.I. It will be a winter-holding campaign in the Alps similar to that of the phoney war, but on a much thinner scale.

LOOKING DOWN THE RIVER THAMES ON THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 7, 1940. This—the first all-night raid, which marked the opening of the big German blitz on London—began in the early evening : after a short pause it went on throughout the night—and throughout the winter. Tower Bridge is here seen standing out against the glow of the fires burning in London's dockland

WHEN LONDON BURNT

A Glance Back at September 1940, when the "Big Blitz" on the Capital Began

—Pictures just released by the Censor

The four pictures reproduced here have a historic interest. Although only just released by the Censor, they were taken over four years ago—on September 7, 1940. From then on, for nine months, London was bombarded from the air almost without cessation—until May 10, 1941, when the "Big Blitz" virtually came to an end, with London unbeaten and the Germans just beginning to sample at the hands of the R.A.F. some of the horrors of the aerial warfare which they themselves had unleashed. Despite the "Little Blitz" of early 1944, and the V-bomb campaign of more recent months, London has never had to endure again what it endured from September to May, 1940-41

THE DAYLIGHT ATTACK ON THE CAPITAL ON THE AFTERNOON OF SEPTEMBER 7, 1940—the first mass attack carried out by the Germans and the first of a long series of heavy raids which continued until May 1941. Big fires were started in the dock areas and London was enveloped in flames and smoke. This picture was taken whilst the raid was actually in progress and shows the dense columns of smoke rising from behind Tower Bridge

***On left, below*—FIRES RAGING IN THE VICINITY OF THE TOWER OF LONDON during the first mass daylight raid on Saturday, September 7, 1940.** Enemy bombers were still overhead when this picture was taken

***On right, below*—THE SCENE IN CUBA STREET, SHADWELL, EAST LONDON, on the same day and in the same raid**

The EPIC of WALCHEREN

The Landing of the Royal Marines in the Face of the Unsilenced German Guns at Westkapelle

—An Heroic Chapter of the War Retold by Sphere Artists in Two Special Drawings

HOW THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDOS FOUGHT THEIR WAY UP ON TO THE 60-FT.-HIGH WALL AT WESTKAPELLE, without previous air preparation and under unchecked enemy gunfire. They had come from the port of Ostende in the landing craft seen in the left of the picture, and had one of the grimmest tasks of the war up to date—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

The long and brilliant history of the Royal Marines contains many records of fighting in tight corners. None rivals in concentrated severity the landing operation at Westkapelle, at the western tip of Walcheren. It is now clear that the air preparation which was expected did not take place owing to the grounding of the aircraft by fog. It was not until the afternoon, when weather conditions improved, that the air arm was able to assist in the strafing of the enemy gun positions.

The Westkapelle Marine Force was assembled at Ostende (the Flushing forces came from Breskens), the assault landing craft of small type were carried in larger vessels, and they were supported by a "Gun Support Squadron" composed of converted landing craft. Spring tides were running, which brought the sea-level to a height of 6 ft. above the interior level of the island. Some of the first craft were swept by the force of the wind and tide right over the foundations of the shattered sea wall into the quiet waters beyond. The following craft landed under uninterrupted enemy gunfire at the end of the broken wall: the latter rose to a height of nearly 60 ft.; on one side of it were the shattered remains of a windmill.

With men falling to right and left, the Marines pressed on towards the gun positions in the grass-covered dunes. The fire was murderous. It was at this time that most of the 315 casualties (killed, wounded and missing) were incurred. The sea was rough, breaking in white foam against the groynes and the stranded landing craft which littered the shore line. Reinforcements were drenched with sea water; carbines and light guns were choked with sand. Rushing from cover to cover, the surviving Marines gradually got to close quarters with the enemy. Guns were silenced one after the other, the naval support firing without spotters.

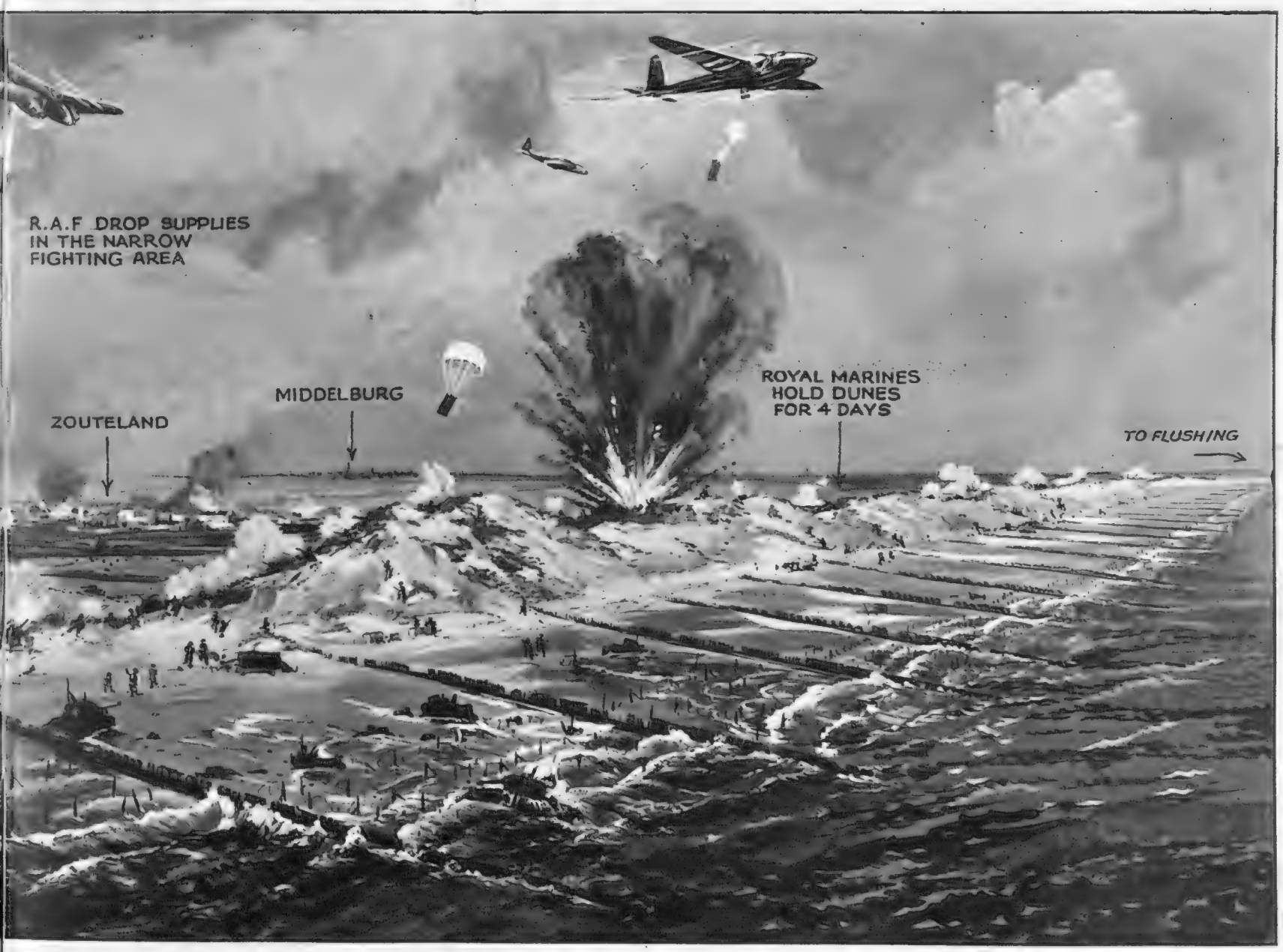
Throughout, the landing craft crews drew the enemy's fire as they continued with their task of discharging the landing parties. Only two vessels were able to approach the beach at a time.

HOW THE ROYAL MARINE COMMANDOS WENT ASHORE AT WESTKAPELLE from the big landing craft which had brought them up from the Belgian port of Ostende

***On right*—FOR FOUR DAYS THE MARINES HELD OUT ON THE DUNE WALL AT WESTKAPELLE, until it was possible for the R.A.F. to send down supplies from the air**—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

While the greater part of the three Marine Commandos pressed northwards towards Domburg, clearing large and small gun-sites, another Marine force turned towards the southern end of the breach in the sea wall. With the first light of dawn on the following morning, they pushed on to the village of Zouteland, which lay at the inner edge of the belt of sand dunes running S.E. towards Flushing. Some fierce fighting took place before the gun batteries were silenced. At the same time a naval beach party was working along the dune barrier a little to the rear of the Marines. They fought the enemy amid the tearing wind which had blown up and which churned the sea afresh, making the landing of supplies almost impossible. Fortunately, the various forces found quantities of German rations which gave them sufficient food for the time being. The situation was such, however, that on the fourth day after the landing airborne supplies were asked for and successfully dropped by the R.A.F. in the neighbourhood of Zouteland, where the sea dunes widen out a little. Further south the dunes become a narrow line before disappearing altogether in the neighbourhood of Flushing. The Marines eventually linked up with the Army Commando which had been landed near that port, near another break in the sea wall. And thus the clearing of West Walcheren was accomplished

THE SCENE ON THE BEACH OF WALCHEREN ISLAND, showing ducks, amphibious tanks and other equipment going ashore for the invasion. After the Royal Navy had reached the landing beach the wind blew up to gale force, tearing craft from their moorings and making it almost impossible to get supplies ashore. The position would have been most serious if the Commandos had not captured quantities of German rations on which to exist. The tanks suffered heavily in the landing, and of those that came ashore several were lost in the floods. Westkapelle, the scene of this amazing landing from the sea, is now a shattered and abandoned village. Soon after the invasion, only twelve people remained there



THE 12,000-POUNDER BOMB WHICH WAS USED FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE "TIRPITZ"—A semi-diagrammatic drawing showing one of the huge missiles dropping from the bomb bay of a Lancaster. These colossal objects have been termed "earthquake bombs"—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

V-BOMBS AND "EARTHQUAKE" BOMBS

And Other Flying Developments in the War by Air

AMERICAN SCIENTISTS TEST THE GERMAN FLYING BOMB. Reconstructed from salvaged parts by the U.S. Technical Command, a German flying bomb is here undergoing tests in a wind-tunnel at a Laboratory in the Mid-West. For this particular flight-test, the bomb is suspended upside down in the tunnel. It is now reported that the U.S. are engaged on the manufacture of these missiles

On left—In the attack on the *Tirpitz* at Tromsoe on November 12, which lasted for just six minutes, twenty-nine Lancasters each dropped one 12,000-lb. bomb on the battleship—a total load of 150 tons. One of them got a direct hit, which at once silenced the ship's guns whilst they were putting up an anti-aircraft barrage. That will indicate the power of these colossal missiles! The 12,000-pounder is the world's biggest bomb: it can hardly have been imagined at the time when the *Tirpitz* was built. This type was designed to penetrate heavy deck armour, or some 20 or 30 ft. of concrete, such as protected the U-boat and E-boat pens along the Dutch and French coasts—hence the necessity for the shape of the nose. Despite its huge size, the 12,000-lb. missile can be carried within the bomb compartment of the big Lancaster, and it is dropped through the bomb doors in the usual way. As the maximum load of a Lancaster is 15,800 lb., it can lift an "earthquake" missile with comparative ease

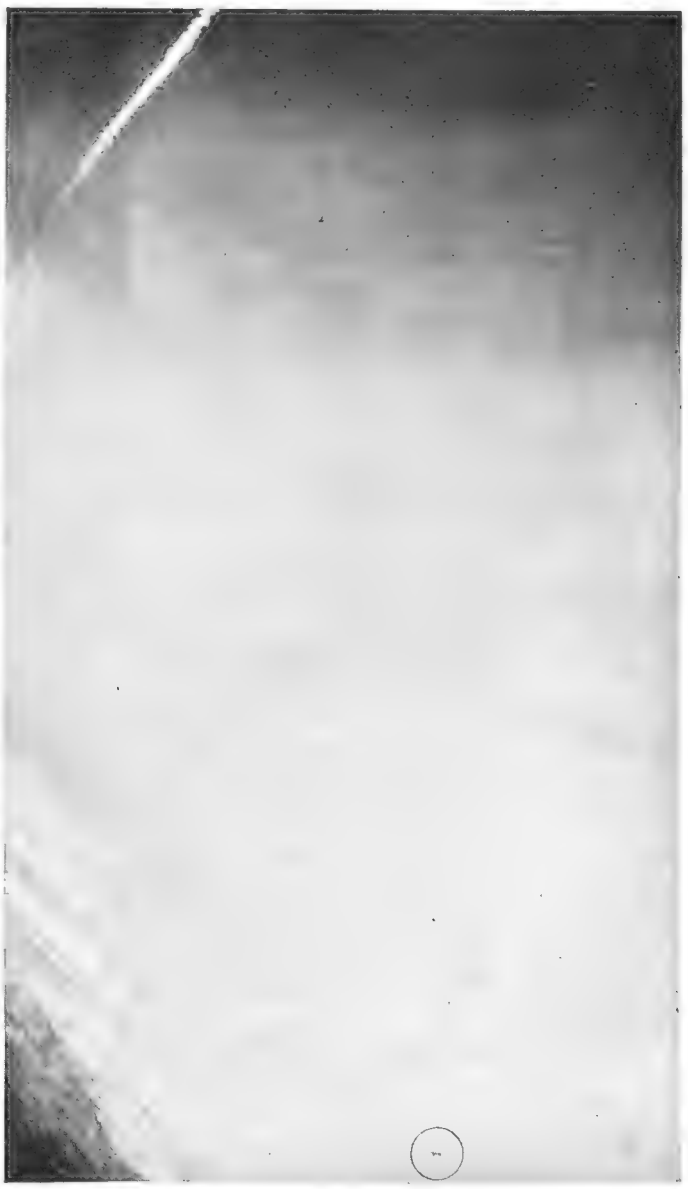
AN INVENTION TO MAKE GLIDER LANDINGS SAFER: Lieut.-Colonel Werner R. Corey stands by the side of his newly-invented "crash skid" attached to an American glider. The skid is a framework of steel tubing bolted to the glider structure and supporting three mahogany runners which curve up under the nose of the fuselage. For this invention, which will greatly reduce landing accidents, Colonel Corey has been awarded the American Legion of Merit

THE NEW AMERICAN JET-PROPELLED PLANE, and how it operates: The P.59A Airacomet is the newest creation in jet-propelled aircraft. It is powered with two turbine engines and has no propeller. The engines are designed to fit snugly against the fuselage under the wings, and they can drive the aircraft at high speeds in the sub-stratosphere. This sketch describes the function of the jets: air flows into the intake A, and is compressed in B; the compressed air then goes into the blast chamber C, where the fuel is ignited and the temperature raised. The turbine D is propelled by air pressure and it, in turn, gives power to the air compressor at the front of the engine. The Nozzle E, through which the air flows at great velocity, creates by reaction the force which drives the aircraft forward

A FLYING BOMB IS BLOWN UP IN MID-AIR: THE STRANGE CLOUD OF INCANDESCENCE LEFT BEHIND AT THE SCENE OF THE EXPLOSION. This drawing was made by "The Sphere's" artist after he had himself witnessed the incident in "Southern England"—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

Many readers must have heard of the "killing" of flying bombs by fighter pilots in mid-air, and must have wondered what takes place on such an occasion. Here is Mr. Davies' own account: "The V1 had passed overhead, followed by a fighter which was firing in, roughly, five-seconds bursts. Suddenly a small flash was seen on the V1's side. For a few seconds the flying bomb went on; then there was a blinding flash as it suddenly blew up. The explosion seemed to last for some seconds, as though the powder was burning in the air. A large brownish cloud of smoke hung about for some time in the centre of the reddish glare. . . ."

AN UNDERGROUND FLYING-BOMB FACTORY discovered by the Americans after they had made their big advance around Metz last week: When they captured Thil, near Metz, during the course of their big advance in that area, the Americans discovered an assembly plant deep underground where flying bombs were, apparently, assembled by the Germans. The "factory" was located in an iron-ore mine, and had been in operation for four months prior to its capture



***On right*—AN AMAZING PICTURE OF A ROCKET BOMB IN FLIGHT:** It was taken during a flight made by two P38 Lightning photographic reconnaissance aircraft during the course of a flight over Germany. After they had observed a strange object shooting towards them from the ground below, before either could contact the other by radio, the V2 rocket flashed by within 100 yards: it was, they said, approximately 5 ft. in diameter and 50 ft. long, and trailed about 30 ft. of flame behind it. One pilot at once sent his plane back on its tail to take this picture with his forward camera. In the upper corner is the webby trail left by the rocket, while in the lower right is the second Lightning. Both pilots said that the rocket disappeared in the clear sky about 30,000 ft. above them within four seconds

INTENSIFYING THE WAR AGAINST THE JAPS

IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC

The Operations on Leyte and in the Pacific Islands Near Japan

AMERICAN PLANES PAY A "SURPRISE" VISIT TO HONG KONG: This picture was made by bombers of the Fourteenth Air Force during the raid carried out on October 16, in which more than 32,000 tons of Jap shipping was caught and sunk in the harbour. In the centre of the view, a Jap fighter is seen roaring around in a steep turn to attack the American bombers. At the right centre, smoke columns rise from the burning docks and railroad yards of Kowloon; while below and across the channel an oil slick marks a blasted tanker. Outside the ship basin in the foreground, another ship has been hit. Above and to the left, two vessels spout flames as they lie off the Royal Navy Yard. The Chinese coast port of Hong Kong was being used by the Japanese to harbour shipping removed from the Philippines and Formosa

THE ATTACK ON FORMOSA BY AMERICAN NAVAL PLANES: The island of Formosa, outlying Jap-held possession between the Philippines and Japan proper, has been subjected to many heavy attacks during recent weeks, in which both carrier-borne aircraft and land-based Super-Fortresses have taken part. This picture was taken when planes from a U.S. carrier force bombarded Jap installations on the island. Bombs are actually seen exploding on the warehouses and industrial sheds of Kagi during the attack. Between Formosa and the Jap mainland lie the Ryukyu Islands, which have also been receiving a good deal of attention from the American bombers

OVER THE ISLAND OF IE, IN THE RYUKYU GROUP: The airfield is clearly outlined below: above is one of the carrier-based American planes which took part in its bombing on October 19. Since the landings in the Philippines, U.S. attacks on these Jap-held islands between Formosa and the Jap mainland have been very considerably stepped up

AMERICAN BOMBS HIT JAPANESE SHIPPING ALL OVER THE WESTERN PACIFIC. A group of bombs are here bursting around small Japanese craft caught close to the shore on Okinawa Island, in the Ryukyu group. This action took place on October 9, the first day of the intensified attacks throughout the Western Pacific by the American Fleet. Since then the invasion of the Philippines has been opened by the big landings carried out on Leyte Island on October 20, and by subsequent landings elsewhere in the same area

ON LEYTE ISLAND, IN THE PHILIPPINES: The strategic airfield built by the Japs, which was captured by General MacArthur's forces soon after the landings: On October 25, General MacArthur reported that American forces held two-thirds of the Island of Leyte and were continuing their operations against the remnants of the Japanese Sixteenth Division (which captured Corregidor in the early part of 1942), and that the enemy's losses in killed alone on Leyte had risen to the stupendous total of 14,000—as against American losses of 518 killed, 139 wounded and 1,503 missing. The invasion of Leyte began on October 20, when beachheads in the Tacloban area were secured with small casualties. Troops and supplies at once began to flow ashore from the largest naval armada yet concentrated in the Pacific area. The huge convoys had been assembled secretly, in dozens of American bases in the South-West Pacific, for the invasion of the Philippines over two years after the fall of Bataan and Corregidor to the Japs

THE STORMING OF THE BEACHES: American troops dash through the surf from their landing craft during the first invasion of Leyte Island on October 20

PART OF THE ISLAND, SHOWING TACLOBAN, THE CAPITAL, which was secured "with small casualties." The American forces made several landings in this area. The first was on the tiny island of Suluan, which lies just off Leyte: four others were made shortly afterwards

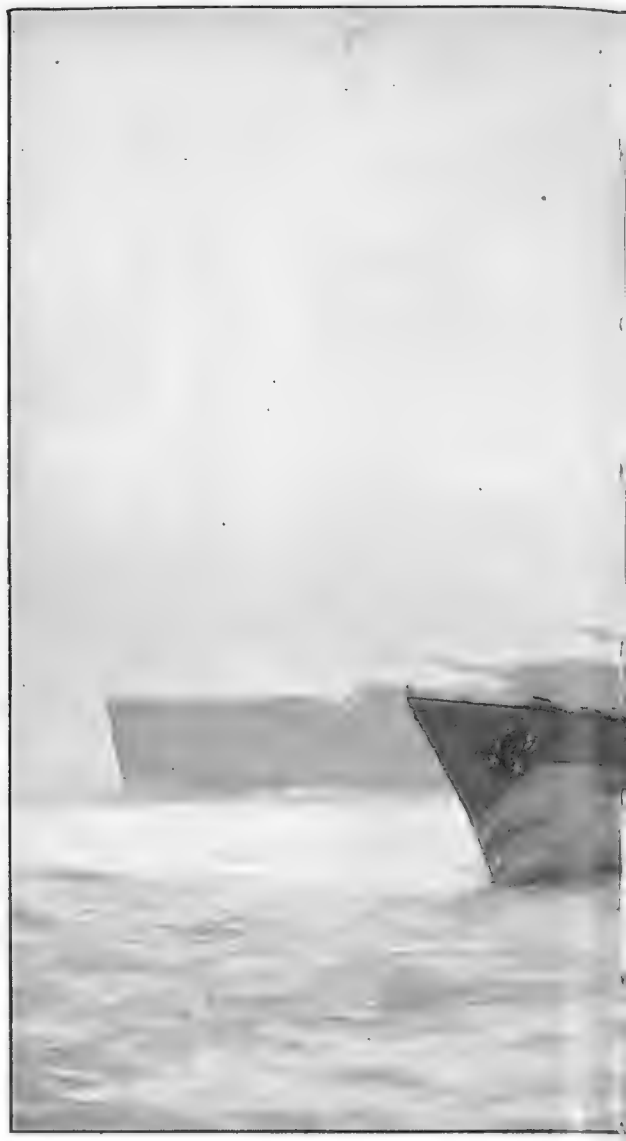
LANDING VESSELS OF VARIOUS TYPES CROWD INTO THE BEACH AT LEYTE UNLOADING U.S. TROOPS AND SUPPLIES. At the left centre, dozens of trucks swarm around a pile of material dumped on the beach between newly-worn roads leading into the interior. The invasion armada—the largest ever employed in the Pacific—carried at least 250,000 troops and their necessary supplies to the island

THE RESCUE OF AN AMERICAN AIRMAN IN THE CHANNEL by an R.A.F. launch in 12-ft.-high seas—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

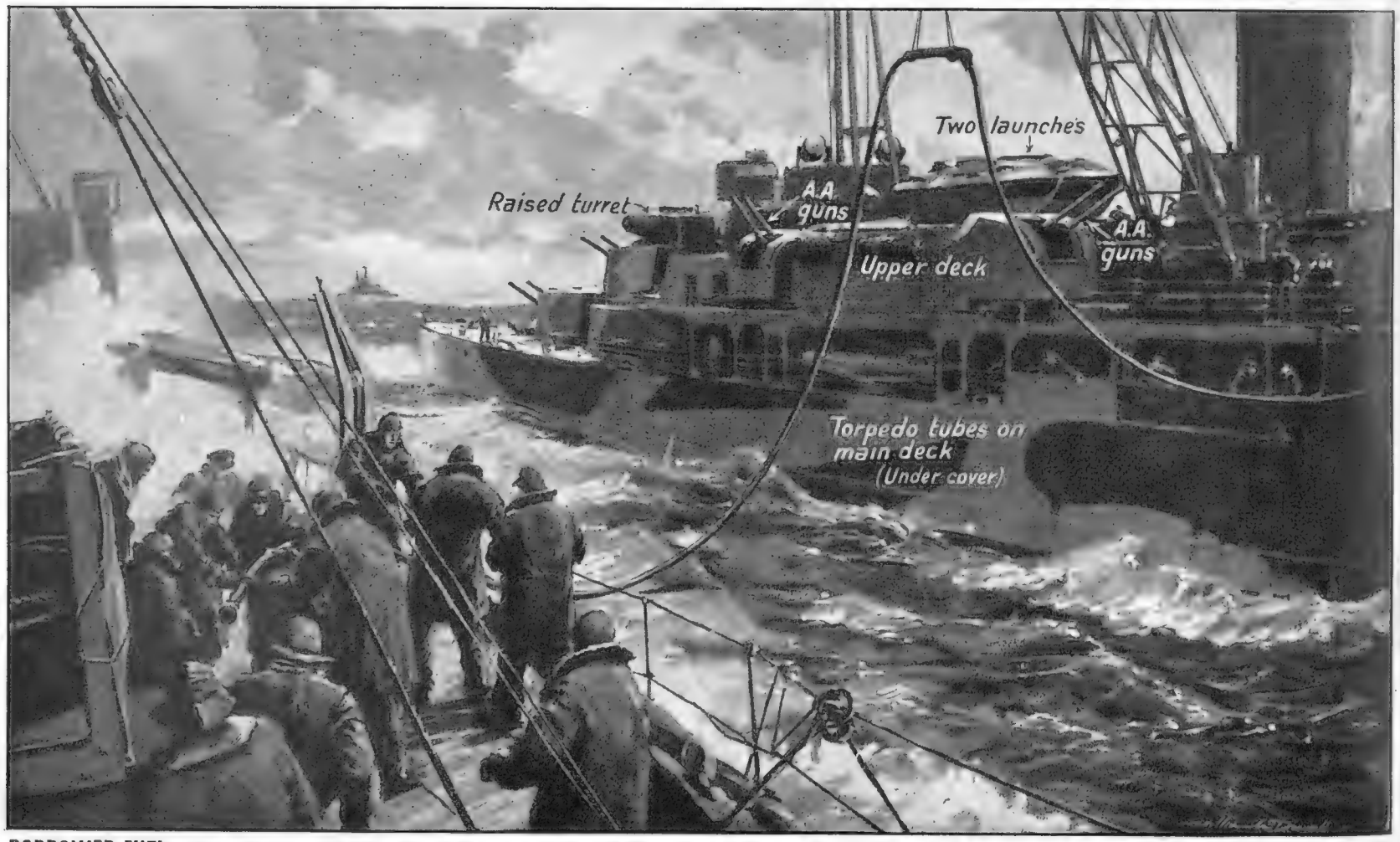
Plunging into waves 12 ft. high from an R.A.F. high-speed rescue launch, a British pilot officer swam to an unconscious American airman and, with the aid of a lifeline, got the man to safety. The skipper of the launch said later that nobody could have lived long in such a sea, even with a Mae West: he tried to bring the launch alongside, but it was impossible owing to the risk to the unconscious airman. The rescue vessel put its head to the heavy sea to allow the line to be carried down-wind to the pilot officer and his unconscious burden as they were being buffeted by the waves before being taken aboard

THE NAVY CARRIES ON in WINTRY WEATHER

Special *Sphere* Drawings of British Warships on the High Seas in Winter



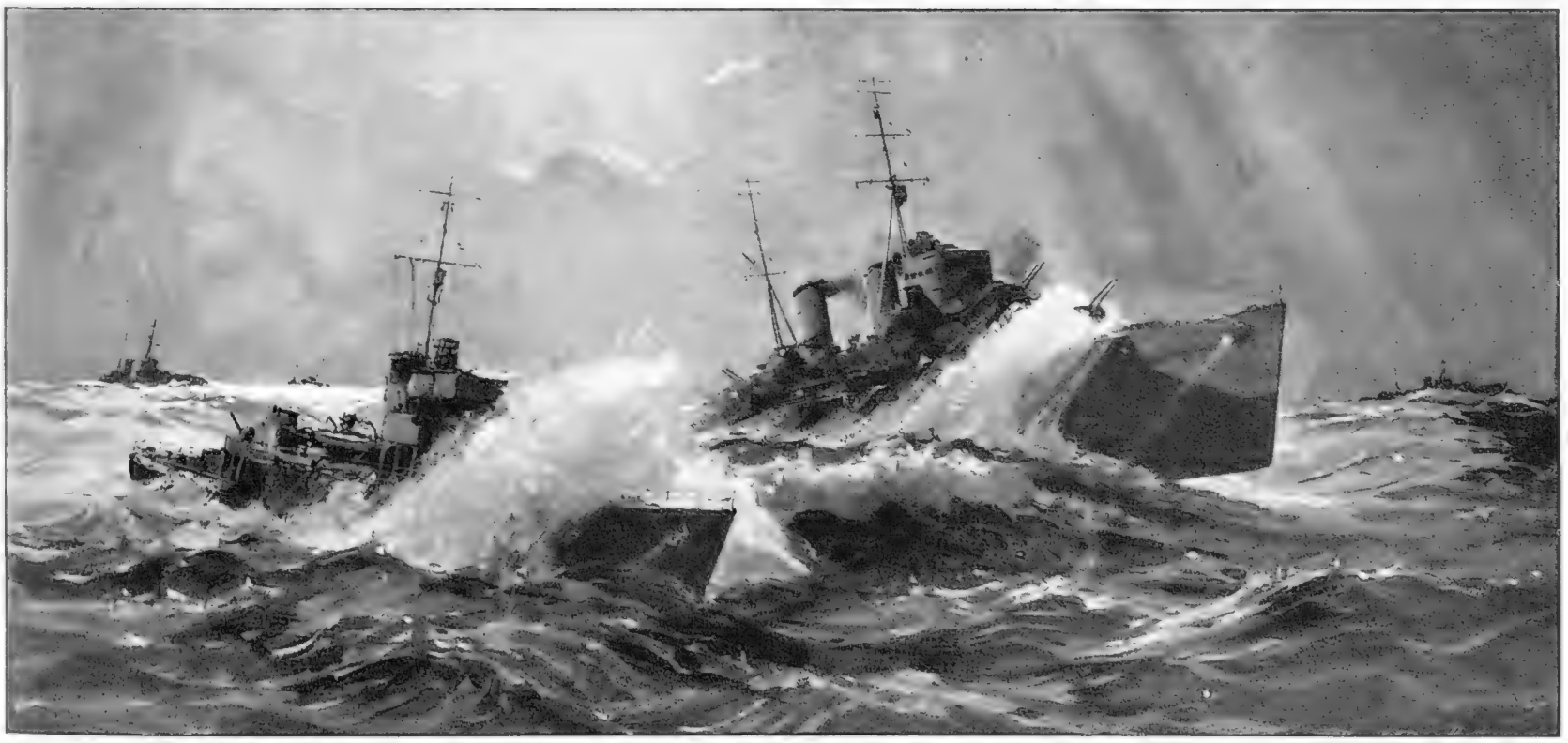
Borrowed fuel (*below*):
The problem of keeping the Navy supplied with fuel and ammunition is a vital one, and requires a vast organisation. With vessels far away from their home ports, a fleet of supply ships is needed; merchant ships to bring the ammunition, and tankers for the oil fuel. Sometimes, bad, heavy weather conditions will exhaust the fuel of a ship on patrol, leaving her without sufficient to get to the nearest supply. In such cases she must borrow, and the drawing shows such an episode. A destroyer, with her fuel running perilously low, has signalled a Mauritius class cruiser. While the two vessels steam slowly side by side, the cruiser sends over a pipe-line which is suspended from the crane ordinarily used to handle the cruiser's seaplanes or boats. The pipe is supported on a small, well-padded platform to prevent chafing and too violent a bend, and plenty of slack is given in case the motion of the two ships should snap it. A working party in winter rig is bringing the end into the destroyer preparatory to screwing the connection to the fuel tanks. This drawing, amongst other things, well shows the clean and compact arrangement of the many guns and fittings of the modern British cruiser. On the upper deck, just aft of the crane, are the twin A.-A. gun-turrets; stowed above them are the ship's heavier launches. Below, on the main deck, can be seen the torpedo-tubes. On the destroyer, behind the working party, is one of the davits used to get torpedoes aboard



BORROWED FUEL: A BRITISH CRUISER CARRIES OUT A TICKLISH JOB AT SEA—that of refuelling a destroyer in a heavy sea and during a snowstorm. The task took some hours to accomplish under bitterly cold conditions and called for skilful handling of both vessels whilst in progress (*See notes above*)—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

A BRITISH DESTROYER WITH A FINE RECORD: H.M.S. "MATCHLESS," A 1,935-TON VESSEL OF THE MILNE CLASS, which was completed and commissioned during the present war and which exhibits the graceful lines of the modern warship—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

Many of Britain's destroyers were built long before the opening of the present war: for long they held the seas during England's darkest moments, when this country stood alone against the might of Germany and Italy and their satellites. To-day these old and sturdy veterans are being reinforced by other vessels which were still on the stocks when the war clouds blew up. Such a one is *Matchless*, singled out some time ago for commendation of her work since February 1942, when she was first commissioned. This destroyer is armed with six 4·7-in. guns as her principal weapons, and she carries four 21-in. torpedo tubes. She is 354 ft. in length and exhibits the particularly graceful lines characteristic of most modern men-of-war: her speed is 36½ knots. Of the Milne class, to which *Matchless* belongs, we have lost *Mahratta* and *Marten*. Since her commissioning, *Matchless* has escorted a number of convoys to Russia and Malta: she has also acted as a screen to units of the Home Fleet; fought Italian cruisers and destroyers in the Mediterranean; picked up more than 200 survivors; and come through hundreds (yes—hundreds!) of air raids. She presents a clean silhouette suggestive of speed, from her yacht-like bows to her tapering stern: a light tripod mast rises just forward of her squat, raked funnel. Behind her, in the picture above, seen through the Northern mists, is the mighty British battleship *King George V.*



WINTER WEATHER FOR THE NAVY: A BRITISH CRUISER AND AN ATTENDANT CORVETTE BREASTING THE HEAVY SEAS now being experienced around our shores, whilst coming back to a British port for re-ammunitioning after service along the enemy coast—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

With the advent of winter gales, the life of the Navy becomes harder. Ships of all classes must keep the sea, and they must be prepared to take whatever weather comes. Those in Northern waters fare worst, actually; for to the angry seas is added low temperatures—so low sometimes that the spray freezes as it breaks, forming ice which has to be steamed off or actually chopped away. The big ship, such as the battleship, is naturally the most comfortable in heavy weather. Her big displacement and great beam render her slow to respond to big seas and, though she dances the "deep sea dance," as Kipling called it, she does it to a stately measure, unlike the livelier motion of the smaller craft—the cruisers and destroyers. The latter are notoriously "dirty ships" in bad weather, and as it is manifestly impossible to fight a ship which is rolling and taking heavy seas that sweep her from end to end, this class are often compelled to run for the nearest port to shelter until the weather abates. In bad weather much depends on the speed of the ship. A battleship of 35,000 tons does not easily ride a big wave, but plunges heavily through it; though she may take a lot of water aboard, little harm is done because of her strong construction. Also, with a beam of 100 ft., she is less liable to roll easily. But the cruiser is a livelier ship, and will rise more easily to a sea, though to the possible discomfort of all on board, and all loose fittings, both on deck and below, have to be well secured. The manner in which a ship behaves in bad weather depends on several factors, notably the length of the vessel compared with the length and height of the seas; the course of the ship in relation to the direction of the wind and sea, and the speed of the ship. Thus, a short vessel may climb the slope of each individual sea and ride down into the trough to climb the next one. A longer ship may bestride two seas at once, and so have her stern lifted by one sea while the second breaks heavily over her forecastle. In such circumstances much depends on the skill of the man at the wheel. The drawing above shows a light cruiser of the Dido class lifting to a sea and throwing off the water which has come over her bows

R.A.F. BOMBERS OVER GERMANY

Pictures from Duren and Julich, and the V2 Station at Peenemunde

Photographs of Duren and Julich, taken two days after they were attacked by very large forces of R.A.F. Bomber Command on November 16, show a close concentration of bomb craters, almost without parallel in any previous attack by the R.A.F. The centres of both these recently-fortified towns, which were among the main defences of the Rhine, have been completely destroyed. The attacks were intended to produce this result. More than 5,600 tons of bombs were dropped on these two comparatively small objectives and on the even smaller fortified area of Heinsburg.

In the centre of Duren, only a few skeletons of buildings remain. The rest is rubble. All roads are impassable. Outside this area of complete destruction, most of the scattered buildings are either gutted or destroyed. In Julich, the devastation is equally complete. The main road-bridge over the River Roer is half-destroyed and the only other road-bridge, a minor one, is possibly damaged. All roads through the town are impassable.

A TOWN ON THE ROAD TO COLOGNE IS OBLITERATED BY THE R.A.F.: The centre of Duren, fortress-town near Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle), photographed on November 18, two days after a daylight attack by Bomber Command. All the roads are impassable; many buildings were still burning; and the town has been blotted out under the great concentration of bombs

A GERMAN HEADQUARTERS IN THE AEGEAN DESTROYED BY MIDDLE EAST BEAUFIGHTERS: Rockets from one of the leading aircraft speed on their way to destroy the H.Q. buildings

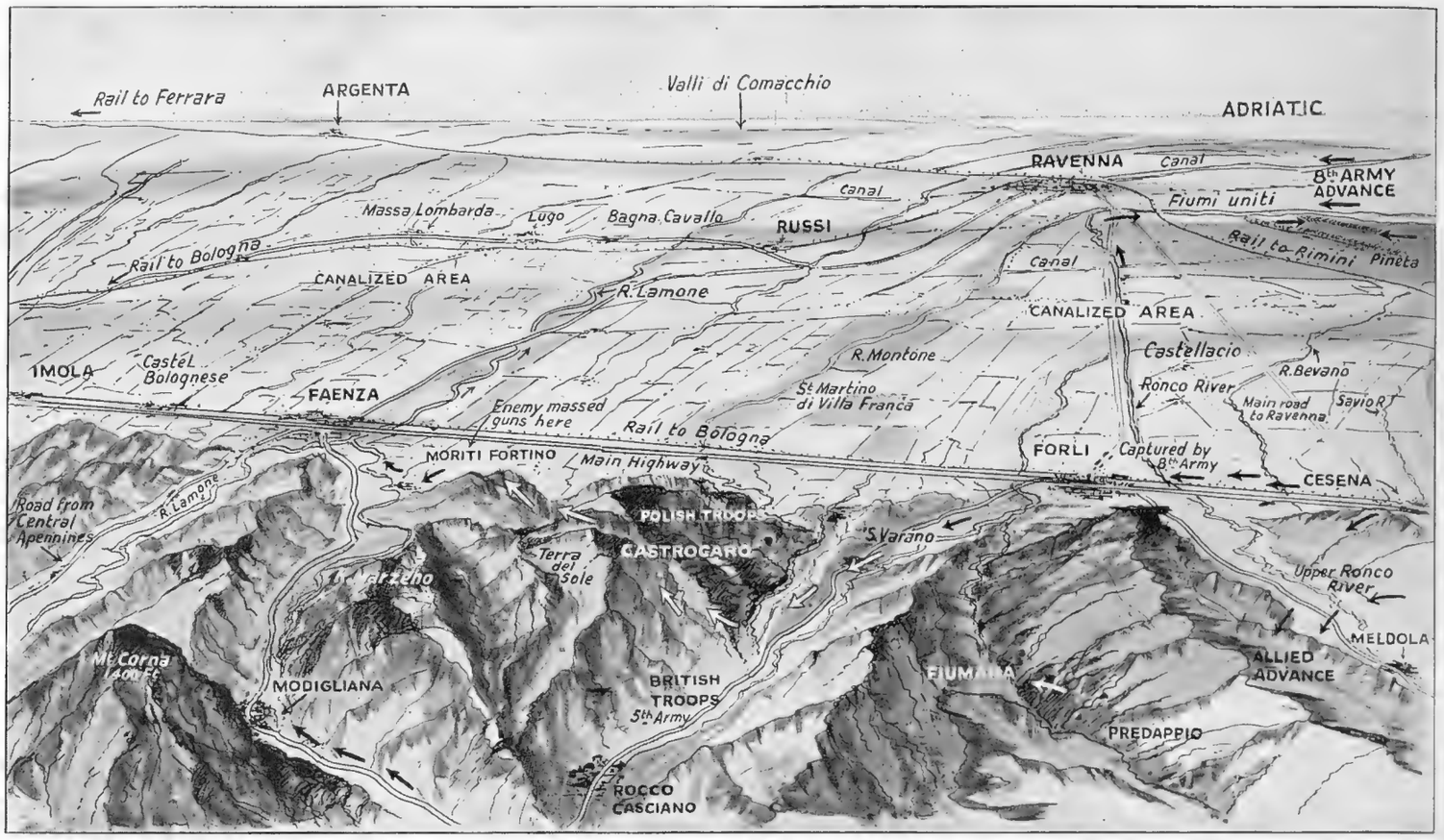
THE H.Q. ARE ALREADY ENVELOPED IN SMOKE AND FLAMES, as still more rockets pour their lethal charges into the target: Middle East R.A.F. Beaufighters recently paid a dramatic call on the German Headquarters situated on the island of Calino, in the Aegean Sea. During daylight, these rocket-carrying Beaufighters made a ground-level attack on this building, used for some time as German headquarters. They pinpointed their target in the now-familiar Beaufighter fashion, and on the completion of the attack the building was left totally destroyed

THE GERMAN EXPERIMENTAL STATION AT PEENEMUNDE, where the V 2 (rocket bomb) weapons were developed, after attacks had been made by the R.A.F. This picture was taken in September 1944 (compare it with the smaller picture on the right)

THE SMALL TOWN OF JULICH, NEAR AACHEN, had been converted by the Germans into a strong fortress on one of the approaches to the Rhine, and presented a considerable problem to the Allied ground forces. During the afternoon of November 16, heavy R.A.F. bombers arrived over the town—with this result. The town centre is completely destroyed and the main road over the River Roer (on extreme right) is half-destroyed. Many buildings were still burning when this photograph was taken two days later

BEFORE THE R.A.F. ATTACK ON PEENEMUNDE : The V 2 rocket experimental area photographed in June 1944. Thanks to the vigilance of the R.A.F. photographic reconnaissance services, Germany's V 2 rocket projectile was known to British scientists long before the first of these much-vaunted "mystery weapons" was fired against Britain. The picture above and the one on the left were taken at the enemy's experimental establishment at Peenemunde—the upper one in June 1944, and the one at the left in September of the same year. In the upper picture, A shows the light flak positions; B, the cradles for transporting rockets; and C, two rockets. The picture on the left illustrates how heavily the experimental area was pounded from the air. The annotation A reveals that at this time the light flak positions were no longer on the roof of the damaged building

THE R.A.F. SMASH THE GERMAN RETREAT BRIDGE AT ROERMOND : Clouds of smoke rise from the target as bomb-loads from Mitchells go down on it. Medium bombers of the Second Tactical Air Force scored a major success on October 28, when they attacked and destroyed a large road-bridge over the Maas at Roermond. Crews taking part saw at least three sticks of bombs strike the centre of the bridge, which then collapsed



THE COMBINED ATTACK ON THE GERMAN POSITIONS GUARDING THE LOMBARDY PLAIN: showing the approaches to Forli (captured on November 8) and Faenza. Each of the hill positions has had to be fought for, and each of the river crossings has been seriously contested by the Germans—*Drawing by Percy Home*

PICTURES FROM THE ITALIAN WAR FRONTS

Where the Weather Conditions Still Continue to be Bad

When the break-through was made by the Allied Armies through the last hills of the Apennines barring the way into the Lombardy Plain, it looked as if our task was going to be easier than, in fact, it proved to be. The hills are separated from the plain by the main Bologna highway as with a ruler; the railway follows it on an equally straight line. The area beyond is level enough, but heavily canalised and seamed with rivers. Excessively stormy weather swelled these into fiercely rushing torrents, so that the first rivers encountered proved serious obstacles. The enemy clung desperately to the foothills overlooking the plain, thus commanding positions on lower levels. In spite of the exceptional weather difficulties, the Savio, Bevano and Ronco Rivers were all passed, and Forli was captured on November 8 by the Eighth Army, which was operating also to the north towards Ravenna and southwards through Meldola, Predappio and Fiumana.

The Fifth Army came up via Rocco Casciano and came in touch with Polish forces holding strong hill positions in the Castrocaro and Terra del Sole area. In the advance towards Faenza, they met concentrated enemy gun-fire around Moriti Fortino. In spite of this opposition, the Allied armies continued to penetrate the district to the south-east and south of Faenza. The Rivers Marzeno and Lamone flow through steep valleys; all were swollen by the heavy rains In their slow retreat towards the north, the Germans held on to every mountain summit until they were forced back, or were outflanked, and contested every river and canal crossing, strewing mines behind them as they were forced to give ground to the advancing Allies.

TWO NEW REGENTS FOR SAN MARINO: The tiny Republic re-elects its rulers every six months, when six Consuls and two Regents are chosen. In spite of having the war on their doorstep, the Republic carried on with the ceremony as usual on October 1, when the two new Regents were chosen—Theodore Lonfernini and Lesnide Suzzi-Valli

THE FIGHT AGAINST MUD AND BROKEN ROADS: An infantry platoon moves up to forward positions in the only vehicles really capable of this job—the jeep and trailer. The road in this picture is the main axis of a British division. It winds up into the mountains; but it has been subjected to such terrific downpours of rain and such constant streams of supply traffic that it has finally given up the uneven struggle against Man and Nature. The tar-macadam road surface has gone, and the mud is now 2-ft. deep on the road-bed in some places. In spite of this, supply traffic must keep moving, and engineers are employed constantly on the road to keep it fit for essential services

THE BRIGADE OF GUARDS IN ITALY: The approach to Monte Battaglia, with hastily-dug foxholes in the foreground. Monte Battaglia is a spot which will long be remembered in the history of the Brigade of Guards in Italy: 715 metres high, and the dominant feature on the Fifth Army front, it has the ruins of a famous castle on the summit. Early in October the Guards Brigade took over this position from an American division. The Americans had withstood seven strong German counter-attacks, in the course of which the Germans had twice regained, then lost, the hill. After the Guards had taken over, the Germans made one more desperate attempt to retake the important strong-point. The attack was a total failure, and seventy-five prisoners were taken by the Guards on October 11

A UNIT OF THE GRENADIER GUARDS ON THE EIGHTH ARMY FRONT AT BATTAGLIA. The first group of men sit and rest as their comrades climb up towards them, before pushing on to occupy positions facing the Germans in the mountain country

THE ENTRY INTO FORLI: TWO VIEWS AS THE BRITISH ENTERED THE TOWN. After putting up a strong resistance to the Eighth Army, the Germans withdrew on the night of November 8 to prepared positions across the River Montone. Highland infantry, supported by tanks of the North Irish Horse, were the first troops to enter Forli, and they were greeted with enthusiasm by the civilian population

***Below*—THE FLOODED RIVERS ON THE ITALIAN FRONT: The crossing of the Ronco River by boats using a rope ferry over the swollen waters**

—Drawing by W. G. Whitaker

During past days the situation in Italy has remained static at a number of points, and the Army has been giving much attention to the problem of supplying the forward troops. Getting material over the swollen Ronco River has been a big problem. It has been impossible to bring it in the normal way, because of the soft bank and the swift current which has already swept away bridges. Assault-boat ferries are running from bank to bank guided by rings run along a length of rope, in the manner shown in our drawing. In the foreground is the remains of a Bailey bridge swept away by the rapid rush of water. A stretcher party is dealing with casualties brought back from the far bank

NEW PICTURES FROM MANY QUARTERS

Showing War Activities from Widely Separated Parts of the Globe

AT THE FUNERAL OF LORD MOYNE : Troops firing a volley over the grave

Thousands lined the route of the procession for the funeral service at Cairo Cathedral of the late Lord Moyne, Resident British Minister in the Middle East, who was assassinated with his chauffeur, Lance-Corporal A. H. Fuller, R.A.S.C. The procession included contingents of British and Allied Forces, and of the Egyptian Army, members of the Diplomatic Corps and a representative of King Faruk. Immediately following the coffin were Captain the Hon. Brian Guinness, heir to the title, and Captain A. Hughes Onslow, A.D.C. to the late Lord Moyne, who was with him at the time of the assassination. An impressive service in All Saints' Cathedral was conducted by Bishop Gwynne

THE COFFIN CONTAINING THE BODY OF LORD MOYNE IS LOWERED INTO THE GRAVE after an impressive funeral service in All Saints' Cathedral, in Cairo. Lord Moyne and his soldier-driver were assassinated by two members of the "Stern Gang" from Palestine

THE ARRIVAL OF A BRITISH CONVOY AT SALONIKA ON NOVEMBER 9. After extensive sweeping operations through thickly-laid minefields, the British cruiser *Argonaut*, accompanied by other warships and a convoy, arrived at Salonika on November 9. Troops, stores and motor transport were at once disembarked. The first Allied landings in this area were announced on November 5. This picture shows a general view of the scene as the British troops went ashore

HOW THE BRITISH TROOPS ARRIVED AT SALONIKA, IN GREECE : Indian troops and British Paratroops arriving in landing craft on the beach a week after the first British troops had entered the town and pushed on to harass the retreating Germans

FRONT-LINE NURSES ON THE BURMA BATTLEFRONT IN ARAKAN : Outside the "basha," or native building, which serves as their mess are grouped the Matron and Sisters of a Casualty Clearing Station in a forward area near the Mayu Ridge, scene of desperate fighting a few months ago in Arakan. From left to right are—Sister M. I. Cresswell, of Doncaster ; Matron D. M. Field, of Peterborough ; Sister M. Atkinson, of Woburn Square, London ; and Sister J. M. Burry, of Dundee

THE GERMAN U-BOAT 570 IS NOW THE BRITISH SUBMARINE "GRAPH" : It will be remembered that, during the course of operations in 1941, a British Hudson aircraft forced a German U-boat to surrender on the surface. Units of the Royal Navy later appeared on the scene of operations and took charge of the surrendered submarine, taking the crew prisoners. On arrival in a British port, she was closely examined and then put into service. To-day, U-boat 570 is the submarine *Graph* : she is seen above on the completion of a trial trip. She is flying the White Ensign in the centre of this picture as she passes another British submarine at her base. The conning-towers of other underwater craft are seen in the foreground. *Graph* now has a fine record of service

NORWEGIAN TROOPS RETURN TO THEIR NATIVE LAND : This picture was taken on board a British cruiser whilst the men were on their way to the north of Norway to take part in the struggle against the Germans. In this they will now be able to co-operate with the Russian Arctic Armies moving westward into new territory in Finnmark. When the picture was taken, the men were being informed by one of their officers of the tasks lying ahead

LORD GORT TAKES OVER IN PALESTINE : The new High Commissioner is seated while the Clerk to the Executive reads out the Royal Commission. This was read in English, Hebrew and Arabic. Field-Marshal Viscount Gort, V.C., G.C.B., G.B.E., D.S.O., M.V.O., M.C., arrived in Palestine on October 31, and was sworn-in as High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief of Palestine and Transjordan. Lord Gort arrived by air at Lydda Airport, and then drove to Jerusalem, where he was met at the boundary by the Acting District Commissioner, the Military Commander of the area and Superintendent Shaw, of the Palestine Police. The ceremony of reading the Royal Commission and the taking of the oaths of office took place at Government House, Jerusalem

LIFE-RAFT EQUIPMENT TESTED IN A FIVE-DAY EXPERIMENT IN HAWAII : the four men who took part and the equipment they used. Four men of the U.S. Seventh Air Force recently embarked on a mission in which they hoped to learn enough to relay information and suggestions which may save scores of Army, Navy and Marine airmen in the Central Pacific from death or unnecessary suffering. The men set out on a life-raft with Army and Navy equipment for a five-day experiment off Honolulu, where they were moored to a buoy. Here they are shown seated on the raft just before they were towed out to sea. In front of them is seen the equipment they took with them. By subjecting themselves and their equipment to the realistic test of five days afloat, the four volunteers learned lessons of obvious importance—information that may save the lives of many airmen. Following their five-day ordeal, the men were placed on stretchers, after their soaked flight suits had been removed, and taken to an Army hospital on Oahu, where they were checked thoroughly by the Flight Surgeon, given a good meal and put to bed for a well-earned rest

BRITISH AND GREEK TROOPS LIBERATE NAXOS : Two German emissaries from the island standing in the stern of a small boat to talk to their captured sergeant-major. This picture was taken by an official photographer who accompanied British and Greek raiding forces in the liberation of the German-held Aegean island of Naxos on October 16, 1944. At first the German garrison agreed to unconditional surrender; but, later, disagreement broke out amongst them. Two German emissaries then asked for permission to visit a ship to speak to their sergeant-major, who had been taken prisoner. Ultimately, an Allied bombardment from the sea brought about the surrender of the island

A FEW DAYS IN THE COUNTRY

Where Appearances are Frequently Deceptive During a Stay in a "Safe Hotel" Away from the War

By CHARLES GRAVES

FOR the first time in four-and-a-half years I have been able to leave London for a week without asking my Home Guard Company Commander's permission, and have celebrated it by going to what Nathaniel Gubbins would call a "safe" hotel.

The experience has been interesting, to say the least of it. No sirens, no flying bombs, no flying gas mains, needless to report. But also no cocktails because the refrigerator in this luxury hotel had been out of action for weeks, and for several days no marmalade, no stout, no draught bitter and no sunshine.

However, it was not the management, it was the people that intrigued me. Even Sherlock Holmes or Perry Mason would have been deceived by some of the types. Except for those of a few airmen who stayed overnight, practically no uniforms were to be seen, and it was only on the last day of their leave that the casual spectator realised that the rather girlish youth, whom he suspected of being a conscientious objector, had a D.F.C. and Bar, and that the studious, donnish type was a Commando Captain. Yes, it only goes to show that you must not jump to conclusions in wartime.

For example, there was the pretty young wife with her five-year-old daughter, obviously dodging factory work, you would say—in fact, a well-known woman pilot who has just been invalided out of the Service after a couple of crashes in Mosquitoes while carrying out her job as a test-flight engineer. Girl after girl, on the day of their departure, reluctantly appeared in their Waaf or other unform. There was one youth, however, who wore uniform the whole time, and a rather interesting one. The reason why he did this was because he had no other clothes in the world, and though he was a private, he wore his collar ironed back like an officer, with a tie and brown shoes, too.

At first sight he seemed a typical Geordie from Newcastle—bantam weight, slit blue eyes, slightly bandy-legged. What is more, he did come from Newcastle, but only by a very roundabout route, via Switzerland. Only fourteen years old at the outbreak of war, he was still at a preparatory school in Switzerland. For three years he was unable to escape—until the Maquis started operations in the High Savoy, whereupon he slipped across the Frontier, joined up with them—the only Englishman in their ragged ranks—acquired a rusty Sten gun with five rounds and started operations. His account of the feuds between the various Partisan forces, particularly the Red Brigade versus the rest, was most entertaining. There were almost as many scraps to obtain arms from one another as there were to deal with the hated invader. When the Americans finally reached Thonon where he operated they promptly gave him a uniform and used him as a guide and interpreter. Then an English Guards officer, discovering his nationality, had him sent back to London. Here he was awaiting his papers and posting to a distinguished line regiment where he would learn basic training before, as he hoped, being claimed by the Commandos or Airborne Troops. What a lad to meet in a safe hotel. . . .

Then there was the Guards officer who told the sad story of the dump of champagne left by the Germans. This had been found by a Brigadier in France a week or two ago. He promptly ordered a lorry to take it to Brigade H.Q. Unfortunately the Town Major, wanting a lorry for an urgent job and not enquiring the destination of the wine, told the driver to pitch it out and go elsewhere. That evening the Brigadier cheerfully called for his champagne. . . . The Town Major had to confess. . . . there was a wild rush to the scene of the jettisoned champagne. . . . Not a trace was to be found. The Town Major ate alone for days. . . .

Nor must I forget the Arnhem survivor and the tragic story he told of the abominable coincidence of the 9th Panzers happening to pass at the moment of their descent. The Panzers had not the slightest idea of their intended arrival, and were actually on their way through to somewhere quite different. But for that, the whole war might have been abbreviated by weeks. Among the hundred guests we had one or two naval officers, usually recognisable by their black shoes even when out of uniform, a stray peer, a fruit broker and his wife, and a nice-looking boy of nineteen, who had been invalided out of the Army within 11 weeks of getting his commission in a crack cavalry regiment—as a result of rheumatic fever which will give him heart trouble for the rest of his life. It is strange how quickly one gets to know about people in a safe hotel. The gossip is terrific, particularly among the residents who have been there since the outbreak of war and intend to remain until the last V-bombs have duly exploded in Southern England.

Their attitude towards the war is curious. So anxious are they not to miss the 6 p.m. news that the radio is turned on while there is still about five minutes of the Children's Hour to go. On the other hand one does not hear any expressions of sympathy either for the troops in the field or the bombed-out civilians in Southern England. For them, the safe hotel is a complete backwater in which they exist, rather than live, simply to survive until the war is over as quickly as possible and they can return to the South of France or to their former hotels in London and other parts of the country. Personally, my reaction to the news was more acute in the safe hotel than in London, particularly when there was any reference to enemy activity in Southern England. On each occasion I telephoned to London to see whether the house was all right. Perhaps if one stayed long enough, one would get casual and callous about the whole thing—I don't know. The complete absence of alerts is, of course, most refreshing, however used to them one may become. But at the moment it is not much fun to be an elderly widow, however well off.

Servants are unobtainable for re-opening a house. Hotels all over the country have a restriction about the length of time that visitors can stay. And so it is that some of them endure the strangest treatment from the staff, simply because they have nowhere else to go.

Personally, I would encourage all of them to have their own allotment and grow their own vegetables, to give themselves something better to do than penny contract bridge in the afternoon. But it might lead to friction in the kitchen when it came to giving each resident her own or his own produce.

Now that I am back in London, it is strange to reflect on the lives of those residents in the safe hotel. One knows exactly what they will be doing at any given hour of the day, even what they will be eating. Personally, I think that one can pay too much for safety. However, it is nice to know that there are hotels still available for Service men and Service women on leave, where they can get out of uniform, forget the war as much as they can and dawdle around on the local golf course or in the village pubs. True, they are liable to a barrage of gossip behind their backs, speculation as to their identity and a shaking of heads if they go into the cocktail bar more than once a day. But what of that? They can wear civilian clothes and pretend that they are in a neutral country, except for the black-out and the food.

And there are always those delicious snatches of conversation from adjoining tables such as I heard myself.

(1) "My dear, they gave her so much to eat that she couldn't swallow, she could only chew."

(2) "When we were engaged you never got angry. What's happened?"
"Nothing. Remember the time we nearly had a row and left the room? Well, I went out and bit the banisters."

(3) "When the waiter saw the beetle on my plate he just laughed."

(4) "When I showed him the milk for the coffee the manager quite agreed that *much* too much water had been put in it."

(5) "Believe it or not, I caught a red mullet with a mouse trap."

Yes, there is a lot to be said for safe hotels, as long as you don't stay in them for more than a week yourself. It is salutary to be reminded of some of the pettinesses of peacetime which the war has washed away elsewhere. It is quite a shock to see a dinner-jacket when not worn by a waiter or a dance-band musician. It is a relief to get away from V-bomb anecdotes, and it is a still greater relief to come back to the salty realities of a working life in London as it is lived to-day.

P.S.—During the week in the safe hotel I never saw an egg nor a chop, nor a steak, nor a mackerel, nor a lobster, nor a crab, nor a lettuce, nor a salad. I saw one Dover sole, which I bought privately.

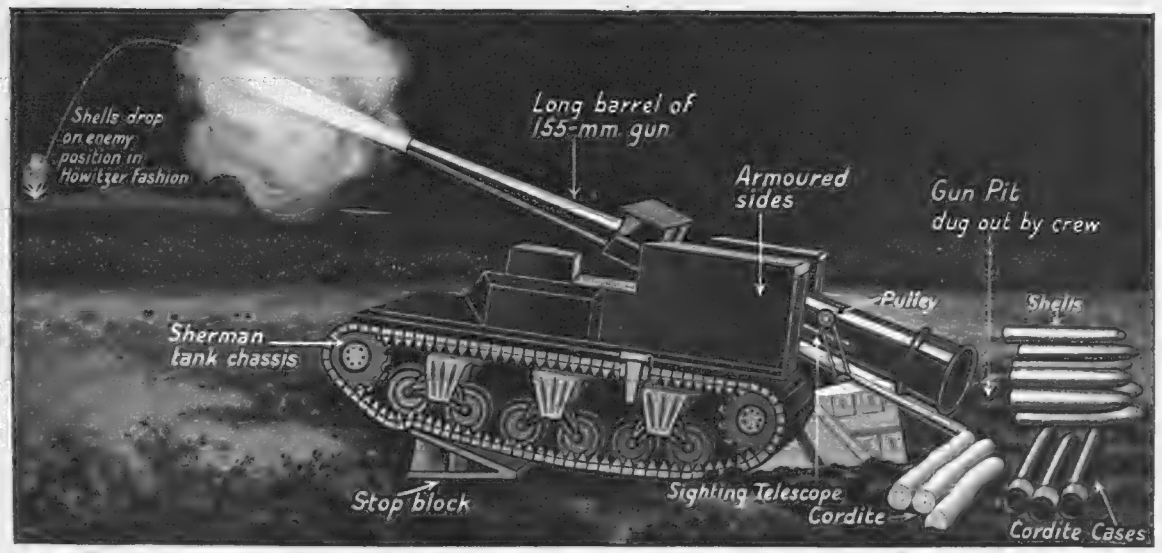
THE ROYAL ACADEMICIAN AND THE VILLAGE INN SIGN: Mr. Algernon Newton, R.A., who has had many paintings hung in the Royal Academy, has, for the first time, hung one of his paintings on the outside wall of a village inn. When Mr. Newton decided to settle in the village of Beckhole, near Whitby, he offered to paint a sign for the local Birch Hall Inn which had never possessed one. He is seen helping to fix it to the wall. The painting, valued at several hundred guineas, is framed in a special weatherproof casing to protect it

AN UNUSUAL SCENE: Fox-hunting in Essex begins again. Severely curtailed, and in some counties stopped altogether, fox-hunting is now in full swing again. This picture was taken at a recent Essex Union Hunt meeting at Cranham, near Upminster, and shows the Master, Mr. T. F. Rawle, in bowler-hat, with the Huntsman, Arthur Webster, and Whip, Clarence Webster

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this publication should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export

NEW WEAPONS OF THE ALLIES

On Land, at Sea, and in the Air



THE BIGGEST MOBILE GUN USED BY THE ALLIES: The American 155-mm. howitzer, mounted on a Sherman tank chassis, which has to be dug-in before being fired (See note at left)—*Drawing by A. Morris*

On right—The Americans have been using two types of heavy artillery with great success on the Western Front. By far the most generally and effectively used has been the 155-mm. howitzer mounted on a converted Sherman tank chassis. These weapons can be hurried forward over rough ground under their own power to forward positions, from which they can pound nearby German targets unmercifully. Aachen was an early victim of these devastating batteries, which can be brought into action almost as soon as they arrive: it is only necessary for the crews to dig pits behind the guns to take up recoil and provide space for loading. Each shell weighs about 100 lb., and the bag of cordite used for propellant is alone a stiff weight for a single man to carry. But the 155's are howitzers, designed essentially for the hurling of missiles into the air and their subsequent dropping on the target. For long-range bombardment proper, field-guns are necessary; and here we come to the second American piece, the 10-in. gun, a mighty weapon which is really most at home on railway mountings, and is neither so mobile nor so nimble as the howitzers. Hitherto, these monsters have not played an important part on the Western Front, but will be brought forward in increasing numbers

TWO PICTURES OF THE NEW AMERICAN "ATTACK CARGO SHIP." The existence of this type of vessel has only recently been announced from the U.S. It is described as being a powerful craft equipped with much new apparatus. In the picture on the left, for instance, a petty officer of the U.S. Navy is seen operating a new-type range-finder installed on the A.K.A. (as it is called in naval circles). By means of this, exact data is obtained for the direction of the gun batteries installed on the ship: the shield is for the operator's protection during action. The picture on the right shows a landing-craft being taken aboard at an American dockyard: during landing operations the small assault craft are unloaded by means of special hoisting apparatus, which has been designed to handle thousands of tons of equipment in record time

ONE OF THE DAIMLER "SCOUT CARS," USED DURING THE CAMPAIGNS IN TUNISIA, SICILY AND ITALY, tackling a gradient of one in one: Details of this fine fighting vehicle reveal that it is a light, four-wheel-drive vehicle which can be driven forward or backward at the same speeds. Comparable in size to a jeep, the Daimler Scout provides armoured protection for the inmates and is capable of a better all-round performance than the jeep, and, as can be seen in the picture above, will stand up to work of a calibre which might speedily break up the American car

THE ARMAMENT OF THE MOSQUITO XVIII REVEALED FOR THE FIRST TIME: In addition to its four machine-guns, this Mosquito is fitted with a six-pounder gun under the nose which fires this deadly-looking shell. Ever since last winter, Mosquitoes fitted with this six-pounder gun have been attacking enemy submarines

NEW LAMPS and OLD

A Fortnightly Causerie on Life and Letters

By JOHN GORE

ANOTHER RAMBLE IN BARSET.—The other day, in "another place," I was trying to argue that the wartime practice of turning all our Allies into 100 per cent. angels and all our enemies into 100 per cent. (or more) devils, of dealing only in sweeping generalities, and reading only headlines and slogans, was a very dangerous practice and apt to lead to sudden disappointments and unexpected set-backs. The true picture of life and war must rely on half-tones. Devils may be not so black as we paint them; angels not so dazzling white; and success and victory, or failure and set-back, are seldom 100 per cent. sweeping or final. No doubt Kipling had that in mind when he described success and failure as two impostors—that at least was a part of his argument.

I am one of many who in these dark years have fallen back for comfort and recreation on Trollope. I stock my shelves with Trollopes whenever I can pick up odd volumes, and from the libraries I have borrowed, and read twice over, no fewer than forty of the forty-five or so novels which he published. Several of my friends have "fallen back on Trollope" as I have, and we sometimes discuss the man and his books, and inquire into the reasons for his contemporary popularity, his eclipse and his gradual return to favour.

Up to now I have usually accepted his present great popularity as being due to his ability to open to us a vanished world as remote as possible from our own unhappy world; a dream world, snug, secure, given over to parish-pump campaigns, quarrels in Clubland and cathedral closes, the pursuit of foxes and suitable husbands or wives; in short, to the small, important affairs of an ordered society, lapped in security, whose aggressions, if in the image of war, contain but 1 per cent. of its dangers. These explanations afford a sound reason for reading Trollope to-day, but are not applicable to Trollope alone. For those reasons alone we might as well fall back on Jane Austen, Fanny Burney, Emily Eden, *et hoc genus omne*, on Thackeray (I will not say Dickens), or even upon the Edwardian novelists of merit. For the supremacy of Trollope to-day, it seems to me, we must look to find some further explanation more exclusively applicable to his art, and in the argument with which I have prefaced this article, such an explanation appears to lie ready to my hand. I believe now that the real explanation of my present devotion to Trollope is his integrity, his fair-mindedness, his power to paint and to recognise half-tones, his refusal to exaggerate good or bad, his total rejection of 100 per cent. angels or 100 per cent. devils. His books are full of good men and bad, good women and bad, but very few of them are stained-glass saints or perfect devils. His heroes are full enough of human frailty, his sweetest heroines can be maddeningly obstinate and, in modern view, almost criminally myopic. No novelist was ever more impartial in his treatment of his villains. For the very worst and blackest, he invites our sympathy by stressing their good points and decent impulses and the difficulties of their circumstances. He is famous for his bone-head heroes, his angelic mules and his very human and sometimes decent rascals.

We revel in his quiet, easy, snug countryside, but we have still greater need of his cool-headed integrity and impartiality. *What is truth?* We cannot find the answer in our own era and world, so we range over Trollope's Barchester if haply we may find it.

A Learner to the Last.—Acknowledging him thus as a gift beyond price, it may seem ungrateful to "look him in the mouth." He is not, in strictest interpretation, in the first flight of fiction writers. He stands competent, high up in the second rank. No doubt, he wrote too much, with an eye too often on the clock and the periodical Press.

He was well aware of it, and latterly his facility worried him. But his industry and facility worked both ways, for good and ill. No other novelist gained so much in competence by practice in writing. Compare the lapses and haltings and expedients of (say) *The Three Clerks* with the ease and finish and polish of *The Duke's Children*—the two covering twenty-two years of constant practice, of trial and error—and one recognises the virtue of constant practice and the great truth that the genuine artist is at school all his life.

Other great writers have produced their best wine first. Many acknowledged masters have been almost one-book men, despite a big output.

Blackmore and Arnold Bennett might be fair examples more or less in Trollope's rank. Bennett never again approached the competence of *The Old Wives' Tale*, nor Blackmore that of *Lorna Doone*. Shorthouse wrote several novels beside *John Inglesant*, but never approached its merit; and instances could be multiplied to point this argument.

Trollope was an industrious apprentice all his life, a craftsman of remarkable integrity who never ceased to be a learner.

But if his enormous output constantly won for him experience in his technique, it drained to the dregs his stock-in-trade. In the range and diversity of his plots he is not to be commended. Novel after novel relies on the same bag of tricks; he was aware of this cause for criticism, and his defence would have been that he was out to draw characters from humdrum life, and was not a competitor in the field of Wilkie Collins.

And of the limited store of articles in his workshop, none was put to more constant use than the gentle maiden who, while sticking obstinately to her lover, yet obeyed her father or guardian. The heroine, at once mulishly obstinate and insufferably obedient and resigned, figures again and again—for our admiration and irritation.

Realism or Convention?—Trollope's honesty in self-criticism somewhat confounds me. He admits clearly enough that he was aware of the dangers of facility, of writing too many novels. But he does not subscribe to my argument that he was "at school" to the last, for in his autobiography he sets high store by *The Small House*, and rather skates over his last political masterpieces.

But it is worth remembering on this point that his autobiography ends *before* the publication of his last ten novels, of which *The Duke's Children* was one and admittedly the best. Nor, I think, would he have seen eye to eye with me about his gentle maidens. He was immensely proud and fond of them. He admits indeed that Lily Dale was a prig, but he loved her, and was assured that his contemporary public did so also. He would not have admitted that too many of his heroines came out of the same box, and that only Isabel Boncassen and, in lesser degree, Mary Thorne stood against the tide of resignation and submission, and survive to-day as rare "moderns" in his gallery of portraits of heroines.

Lily Dale was, it is true, less submissive than obstinate. But Lucy Roberts, Mary Palliser, Mrs. Lopes, Mary Lowther, Grace Crawley, and some others, it must be admitted, are cast in much the same mould, and employ too often the same clichés about filial obedience and resignation.

Trollope was a realist. There have been few more honest interpreters of an age and very few more efficient and complete.

His gallery of heroines raises a query of some importance to the social historian. Does human nature change swiftly, or are the changes apparent in the conduct of successive generations nothing more than external—fashions of dress and habits of expression and ephemeral trends of conventional practices, rather than changes of heart or revulsions in nature? What we must admit is that it was far harder for a Victorian girl to "kick over the traces," to follow her heart, to have her way if the man of her heart was not cut to the pattern of parental approval. The domination of the elders, the penalties entailed by setting conventions aside, were then enormously stronger barriers. But we have only to study our own family histories to be made aware that those obstacles *were* surmounted.

I turn the pages of my own old family albums and note with sympathy the faded daguerreotypes of my long-dead little great-aunts in their crinolines and bustles and pork-pie hats, and I recall how not a few of them kicked over the traces, followed their hearts, were off with their Jocks of Hazledene, their Lochinvars, and followed them, for woe or weal, beyond the mountain's farthest rim. And sometimes I read their faded letters, and (after a course of Trollope) I am always surprised afresh to find in those old letters many ideas and expressions livelier, more trenchant, more "revolting," than Trollope would have allowed as possible or probable.

His editors no doubt had an eye on the drawing-rooms of the Victorian era, where strict convention reigned. That is almost explanation enough. It is perhaps of no vital importance. Trollope's reputation is secure enough. He tells us—and how the commercial details shocked his own contemporaries!—that he made £70,000 by his novels up to 1879: £85,000 perhaps by the end of his life.

In terms of our money, call his monetary reward £150,000 or more. But what nimble accountant will be so bold as to estimate in terms of money—astronomical figures—the value to generations of his readers of those forty-five or so novels, good, bad or indifferent, of that blessed county of Barset?

And one word more—on Trollope on the stage. I never thought to see, still less to enjoy, a play about Barchester. *Scandal in Barchester* has changed all that. This beautiful, touching, faithful play has enhanced many reputations and opened my eyes to Trollope's greatness. The author of the novels, the author of the play, the players of the stage characters—all are crowned with laurels at the Lyric to-day. There I learned that what is true, with me, of Shakespeare's plays is as true of Trollope's novels. I can only assess the merits of the plays (as plays) when I have seen them acted. And so with the Barchester novels, this play at the Lyric has opened my eyes to the dignity which Trollope saw in Mr. Crawley and the beauty of soul and body which he put deliberately into Grace Crawley. In the hands of a great actor, Mr. Crawley's dignity and integrity have banished his oddities and redeemed his fame.

LESTED LODGE, No. 7 WELL WALK: A Georgian house built in eighteenth-century French style, described as being absolutely unique, with not another like it in London. It was once the home of the late Mrs. Radford, whose collection of china, books and armour was visited by Queen Mary

NO. 9 WELL WALK, occupied by Professor Bellot. Nos. 7 and 9 were originally one house, the old Hampstead Assembly Rooms, which have associations with Dr. Johnson, Fanny Burney and Brahms. The last-named is said to have given recitals of his works there

WAR IN WELL WALK, HAMPSTEAD: An acute controversy has been raging in Hampstead for some time over a Compulsory Purchase Order regarding house property in beautiful and historic Well Walk. Four houses are involved in all; but a number of other property-holders are also affected. Of the four houses, two—Wingfield House and Weatherall House—are derelict; the third—Lested Lodge—has not been occupied for five years; but the fourth—No. 9—is occupied. Several petitions have been drawn up containing over a thousand signatures

It is proposed to erect a block of flats to house 200 working-class people, and the Hampstead Preservation Society have suggested an alternative site overlooking the Heath and "much more beautiful, open and healthy." In the present scheme, the famous tree-bordered portion of Well Walk would not be interfered with

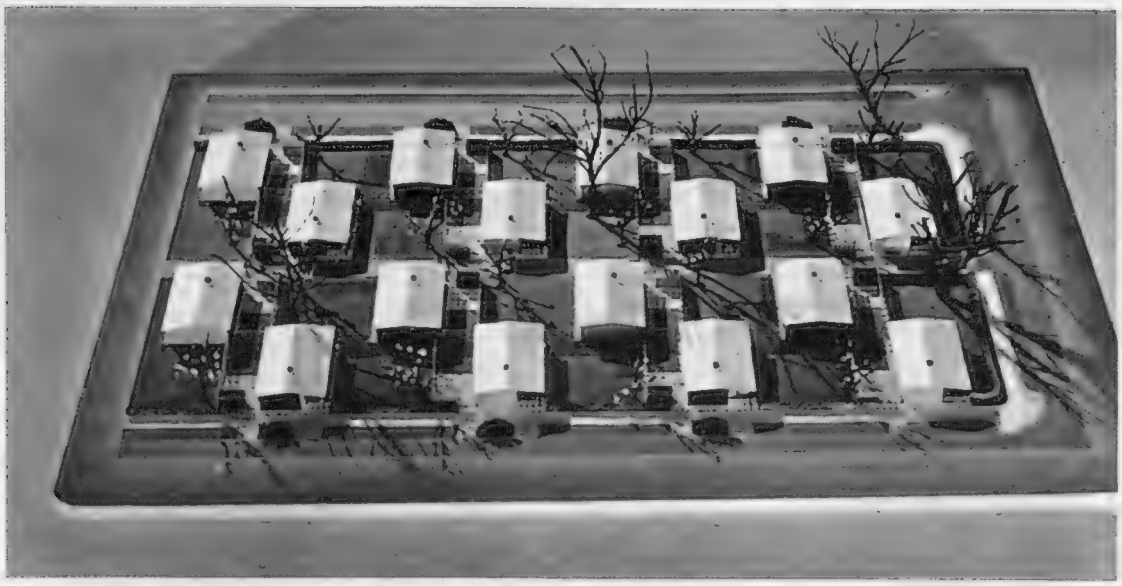
THE ALTERNATIVE SITE PROPOSED BY THE HAMPSTEAD PRESERVATION SOCIETY for the erection of the flats: It is a most unornamental building, known as "The Lugs," and is situated at the corner of Well Road and East Heath Road: it commands a view overlooking the Heath

PREPARING for PEACE—

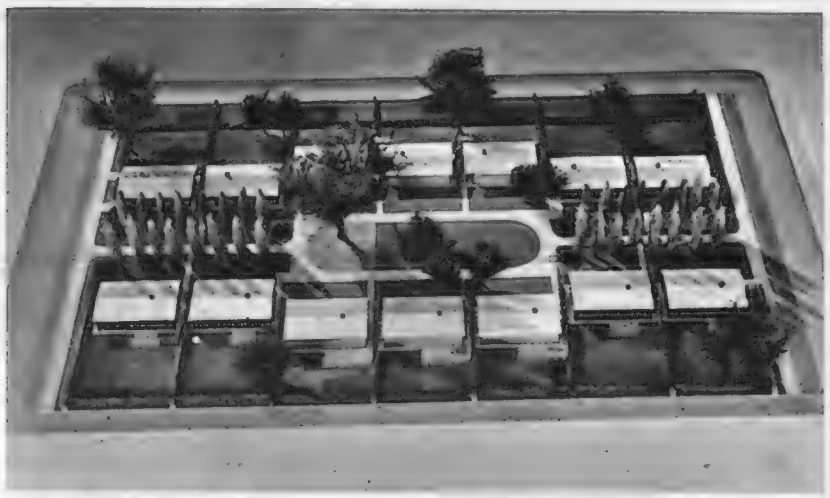
Two New Tasks

"Layouts" for Housing Sites; Classifying the Army for Demobilisation

Housing is the great domestic problem of the moment. Around it revolve a number of other problems, which cannot be settled until the bigger question has been satisfactorily mastered. The Research Division of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, as one of its latest contributions to this subject, has prepared for the Ministry of Health suggestions for the layout and siting of the pressed-steel houses designed by the Ministry of Works for allocation to local authorities. These layouts (with slight modifications) will also be applicable to other emergency factory-made houses approved by the Government. Illustrations of some of these layouts have been prepared by the Modelling Unit of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, and are now being exhibited at No. 32, St. James's Square. Three of them are reproduced on this page.



EMERGENCY "FACTORY-MADE" HOUSES AND HOW THEY MIGHT BE LAID OUT: A plan in which the houses have been placed end-on to the approach roads. Although the spacing is compact, mutual overlooking is avoided by arranging the houses in checker-board pattern; individual privacy is further ensured by the trellis screens around each house. This model has been prepared by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning



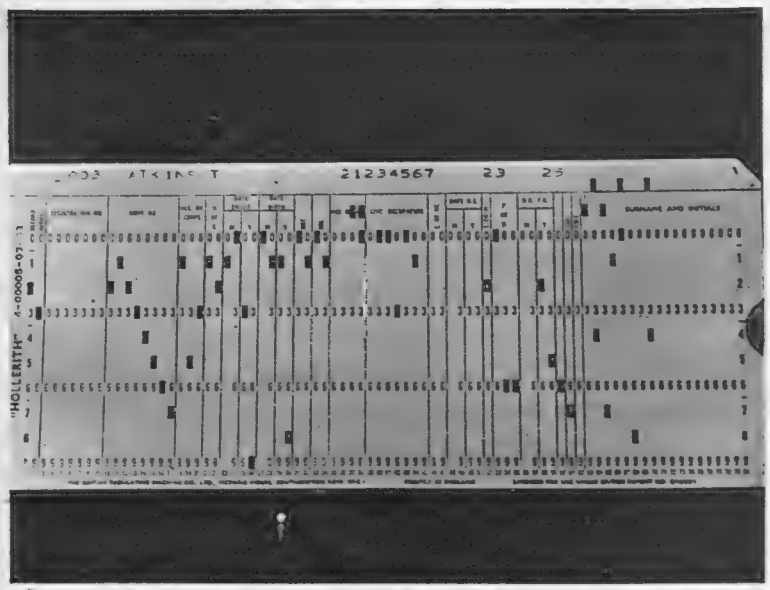
ANOTHER SUGGESTION FOR A GROUP OF STEEL HOUSES: A number of them are arranged round a close designed for pedestrian access only. A portion of the centre plot is gravelled over to provide a small, all-weather play space

THE HOUSES IN THIS SCHEME ARE APPROACHED BY FOOTPATHS LEADING OFF THE MAIN ACCESS ROAD. Although the front gardens are open and semi-public in character, a feeling of privacy is obtained by setting each house back from its neighbour and at an angle to the access footpath, and by the careful placing of the trees

PREPARING FOR THE ARMY'S DEMOBILISATION

THE CODING-ROOM OF W.O.C.C.I. (War Office Central Card Index). Information about every man and woman is translated into a code, ready for the operators, who will perforate the cards. This work is carried out by the A.T.S.

A GENERAL VIEW IN THE "PUNCH ROOM," where the cards are perforated. The material thus gathered will be used during the period of Army demobilisation



HOW THE RESULTS ARE GAINED: One of the cards with the coded particulars of each man punched ready for the machines

Some 350 girls—most of them in the A.T.S. after three months' training—are now working in shifts for twenty-four hours of the day sorting every man and woman in the Army and Auxiliary Services, with age and Service groups, ready for their release when the war with Germany comes to an end. The work is being carried out for "WOCCI" (or the War Office Central Card Index). In five minutes, by means of this index, a complete categorisation of civilian occupations throughout the Army can be produced.

The system tells how the release of any given number will affect the balance of the Army as a fighting machine and answers the problems of re-allocations within the Army. As information is received, it is coded and the code registered. The card is put into another machine, which refuses to pass it through if there is a single error.

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

A VARIED COLLECTION OF NEW BOOKS

Diary of a War Correspondent; A New Work by Norah Lofts; A Series of Short Stories; Sir John Hammerton's Autobiography; An American Crime Story

TO produce a war correspondent's diary at the end of 1944, and to make it vivid and informative enough to deserve a really enthusiastic recommendation, is quite a feat—of journalism or optimism or just sheer performance. Mr. Alaric Jacob has done just that with A TRAVELLER'S WAR (Collins. 15s.), in which he describes his experiences from June 1941 to June 1943. I must say that I had reached a state of depression about such books, in which I blenched at the word "despatches," quivered at the phrase "Monty told me" and shook like an aspen leaf if I saw a character sketch of Randolph Churchill. Yet, largely speaking, Mr. Jacob has all these passages in his book, and gets away with them. Of course, he has a few other items; his book is nearly 450 pages long, but the originality is not in the account of his voyages and battle impressions: it is in his point of view.

As far as one can tell from no other information than a careful reading of this book, Mr. Jacob is a good-natured man with a quirk of humour to his observation, Left Wing in politics, embarrassed by sentimentality, but appreciative of sentiment and a very hard worker. That much his writing tells you: the writing and also the blessed absence of personal photographs.

Mr. Jacob's despatches, by the way, were to Reuter's and the *Daily Express* successively. His sessions with General Montgomery were communal ones, but brilliantly observed for all that. I liked "Monty smiled his rather foxy smile [at El Alamein], the smile which seemed to say, 'I 'm throwing this out to amuse you, but as for me, I am already thinking of something else . . .'"

And as for Major Churchill, Mr. Jacobs writes: "I share a common inability to make up my mind. . . . He is far from modest and his manners are not winning, but nor were Winston's when he was a young man." And the writer's own political convictions are amusingly illustrated when he says: "Randolph was a Tory politician at twenty-two, and I feel with Clemenceau that there must be something radically wrong with a man who is not a Socialist before he is thirty. A Tory politician in a safe Tory seat, just like his father, when he might have put a Churchill into the Communist Party, and kept his family abreast with the times!"

Mr. Jacob's travels took him to Persia, India and the U.S.S.R., and also to Burma, where he spent some time behind the Japanese lines with Wingate's force. His is, in fact, quite a book.

Mrs. Norah Lofts is a writer whom I greatly admire, and to whom I would greatly like to give a good shaking. She has the rare gift of story-telling; in her case a compelling quality that draws the readers through any of her books at express speed, and yet she is guilty of what can only be called sloppiness of construction that is appalling in anyone of her talent.

JASSY (Michael Joseph. 9s. 6d.) is the story of a little girl of that name, and is told by four people who variously affect successive phases of her life. The first is "the boy next door," Barney Hatton, who protects her from a mob of village children who are stoning her for a witch, and thereby earns her lifelong love. He tells of her curious parentage, of her gypsy mother and reformer father, and of her own staunch little character.

From the East Anglian village, Jassy goes to school in a nearby town, but only as a very young chambermaid, not at first as a pupil. Here her tale is taken up by the schoolmistress, a frustrated and jealous woman, passionately in love with another of the mistresses, who innocently chooses Jassy as her protégée. As an adolescent, Jassy's temper is quick, but her nature is as good as ever. She leaves the school in a fine burst of rage and goes to the home of one of the other girls; a lovely old house, long coveted by Barney Hatton, to whose family it had belonged years before.

The pace of the story, which never lags, gathers fresh pace as it is taken up by the pretty schoolfriend, Dilys, and as it quickens it also darkens with the overtones of tragedy till the final violent denouement, which is melodramatic if you will, but still convincing. It is not the literary device of four times changing the angle of approach to the principal character that breaks the continuity of this story: it is the carelessness with which the author leaves ends and bits strewn around her in her impetuous progress.

A little tidying-up would have made this book really first-rate. As it stands, it is still an excellent entertainment and one which I recommend.

The fifth in the series of ENGLISH STORY (Collins. 7s. 6d.) is a more distinguished volume than any yet published in that collection, and includes short stories by Elizabeth Bowen, Mary Lavin, Rhys Davies, Sean O'Faolain and John Pudney, amongst others. The editor's claim that all the stories have vitality is a valid one, and this is particularly true of Miss Bowen's *Songs My Father Sang Me*: a story that is essentially a tragedy, written with exquisite economy and without the cheap and easy device of pathos.

I was frankly disappointed in Miss Lavin's contribution, since I believe that she has set herself a high standard in her own collections of short stories. It is as individual as all her writing, but it is a little other-worldly, not in the sense of Celtic twilights and Deirdres, but in its lack of relation to credible characterisation. Mr. Henry Treece's odd little tale, *The Visitor*, has a flavour of its own, but that is as nothing to Mr. John Atkins's *The Light of the World*. This is the story of a mad gardener, experimenting on flowers till they develop obscene shapes and lethal tendencies; a neat, little seven-page nightmare.

THE BLACK HONEYMOON (Crime Club. 8s. 6d.) is, I am sure unintentionally, a most potent argument against wartime marriages. In other respects, it is an extremely readable murder mystery, set in an American town, but its first impact on me was that it held a warning to prospective brides, not to attach themselves too hurriedly to families seething with old feuds and murderous impulses. In this case, the bride is a crisp, pretty little creature with an independent spirit, and a year or two's experience as the American equivalent of a V.A.D.

The house to which her young husband takes her is big and comfortable, but there the luxury stops. There are no servants beside a homicidal charwoman and an ex-policeman masquerading as a butler. The bride's father calls for laundry at intervals, and there is a mad uncle ostensibly mixing cement in one of the attics.

Nevertheless—or do I mean therefore?—it is an adequately exciting story, and Miss Conyth Little is definitely an author to add to one's list if one is crime-fictionally inclined.

Best-sellers may be counted by the scores of thousands in which they sell, but Sir John Hammerton can truthfully say that his are numbered by the hundreds of thousands. True, he would speak as an editor, not as an author, but he has been responsible for works that have had some record world sales.

Now, in an autobiography, Sir John tells us how these things come to be born, and what were the crises, chiefly in the Northcliffe era, before the volumes went to press. To me, the most entertaining parts of BOOKS AND MYSELF (Macdonald. 15s.) were those which dealt with "the Chief," exposed his foibles and loyally appreciated his great qualities. There are many good Northcliffe stories here, but I most enjoyed his warning to Sir John about an artist with whom he might have trouble. "He 's a litigious little devil," said Northcliffe.

Although there is little editorial indication of it, I could only gather that FEUD IN THE FACTORY (Oxford University Press. 6s. 6d.) is a book intended for very young girls, perhaps those in their early teens. The theme—work in a war factory that is making small component parts for aircraft—is certainly an adult one, but there it rests. The treatment is naïve to a degree, and the writing in the same key. If, however, it is deliberately intended for the youngsters, it must be differently judged, as a very competent piece of propaganda urging all girls to rush into factories and make munitions with little squeals of joy.

And now for a book for specialists, but the kind of specialist that so many of us would like to be—and that is, gardeners. Mr. F. C. King's little book has an esoteric title, but a very lucid text. GARDENING WITH COMPOST (Faber and Faber. 4s. 6d.) is the result of Mr. King's practical experience as a gardener, experimenting with compost as against artificial sprays and poisons. His opinions are uncompromising, and are clearly not over-coloured by the official view. To me, his most heartening passage was one that held that since weeds can be used as green manure crops, they should be controlled, but not destroyed—a point of view, as Sir Albert Howard writes in his Foreword, that will "afford much comfort to the readers of this book."

Miss Lou King-Hall's novel I can only describe as a gallant, but girlish, attempt to give us a picture of the brave new world. FLY ENVIOUS TIME (Peter Davies. 7s. 6d.) starts with some humour and lightness of spirit in 1937.

Her diary ends a few days before war is declared, and the recital is taken up by her granddaughter in 1979. By that time Europe has been formed into one union, and people are eating their food in tablet form. But the girl falls in love with a Russian, who very properly tells her that this state of affairs is artificial and therefore doomed. The tale then passes to her own daughter, brought up in a Chinese family and engaged, as if to crown all, to an international journalist.

World Union is now complete but for the Germans, who, as the book closes, are declaring war yet again. I do feel that the intention here is clear and worthy, but the note is played on too frail a pipe.

AT A BUCKINGHAM PALACE INVESTITURE

V.C.: CAPT. DAVID JAMIESON, of the Norfolk Regiment, leaving the Palace after receiving the Victoria Cross from the hands of the King

V.C.: COMPANY SERGEANT-MAJOR PETER WRIGHT, of the Coldstream Guards, whose D.C.M. was altered by the King to a V.C. for gallantry at Salerno

D.S.C.: LIEUTENANT REGINALD DODD, R.N.V.R., who received the Distinguished Service Cross for his part in the Sicily landings, with members of his family outside the Palace. Left to right—Mrs. J. Dodd (mother); Mr. Cecil Armitage, C.B.E. (father-in-law); Lieutenant Dodd; Mrs. Reginald Dodd; and Mr. John Dodd (father)

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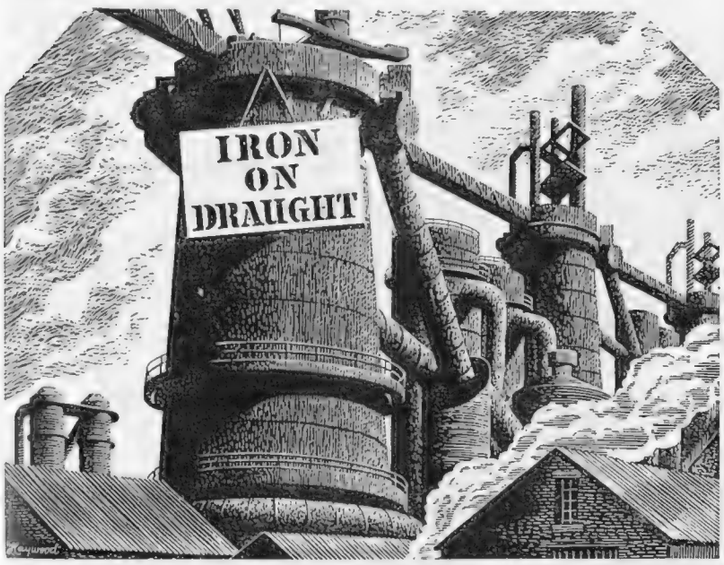

MOLTEN metal is very hot, as you will know if you have ever seen a blast furnace "drawn." "Hot enough for anything" you would say, but you would be wrong, for sometimes it solidifies on meeting the comparatively cold air outside the furnace and so causes a stoppage in the tapping hole. The quickest and easiest way of clearing it is to *burn* the solidifying metal away with high pressure oxygen. That is why in modern iron and steel works you will find oxygen laid on to a convenient point near each blast furnace and, whenever the furnace is being drawn, an operator ready to use the "oxygen lance," if the metal does not flow freely. This is but one of many examples of how the liquid oxygen and compressed gas industry helps to speed things up in the making and manipulating of iron and steel.

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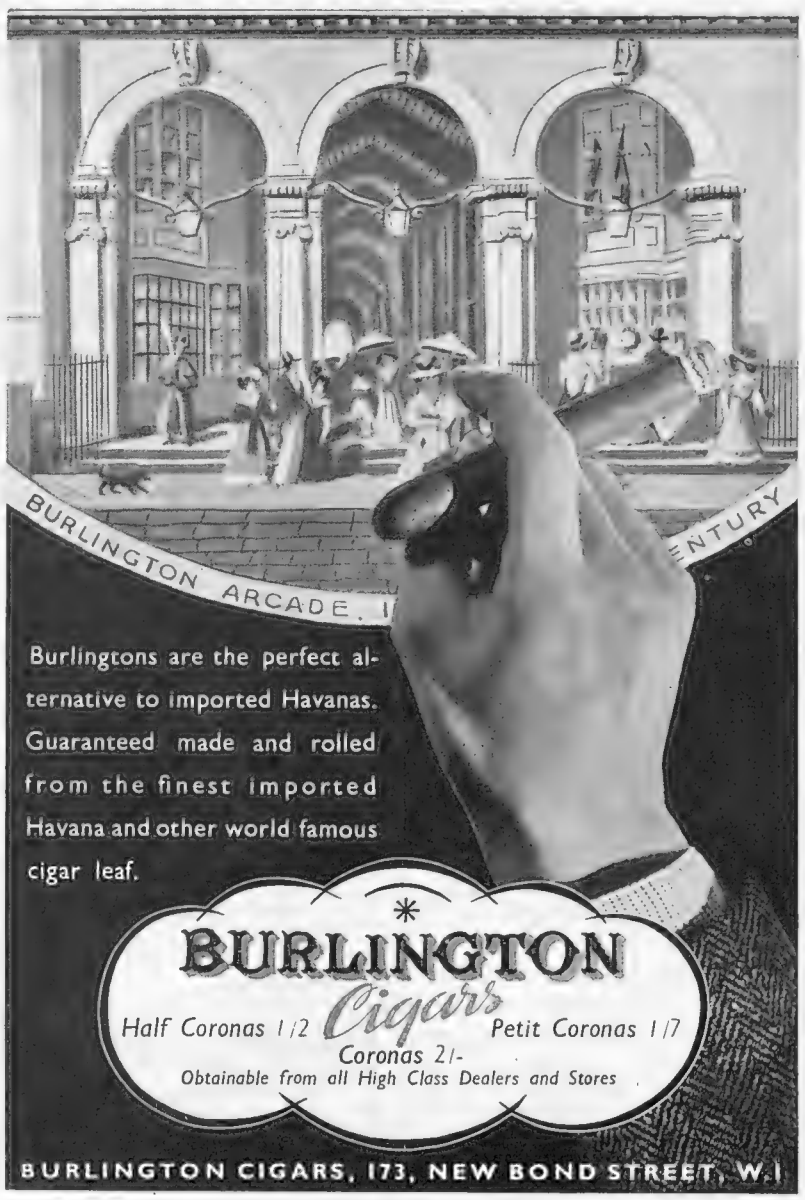

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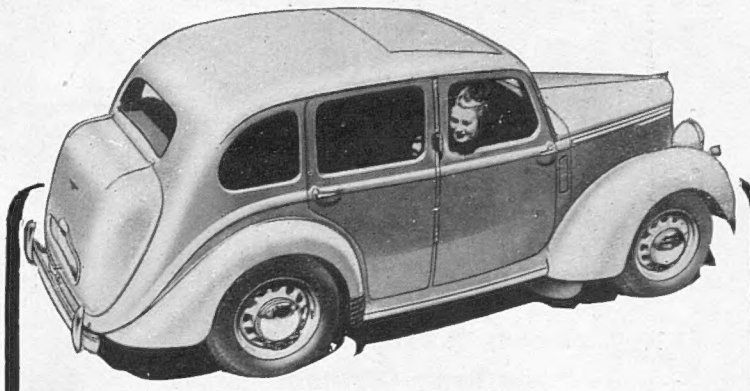

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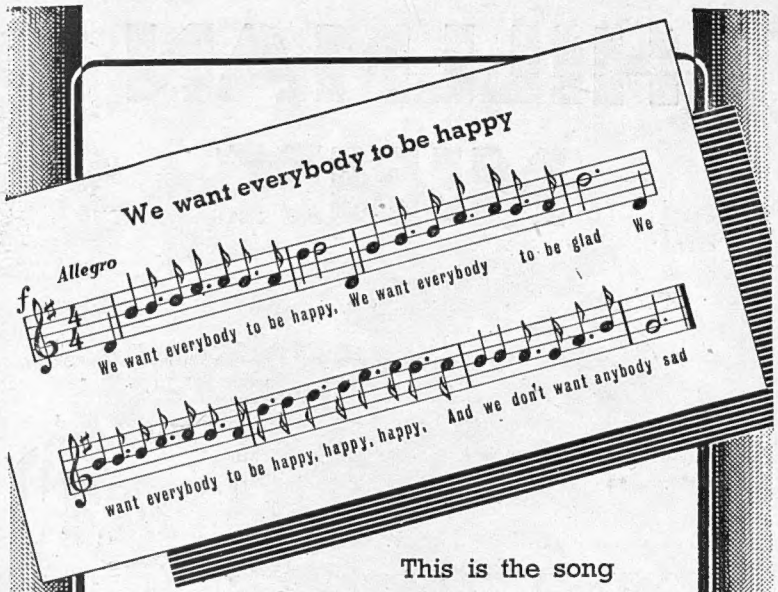

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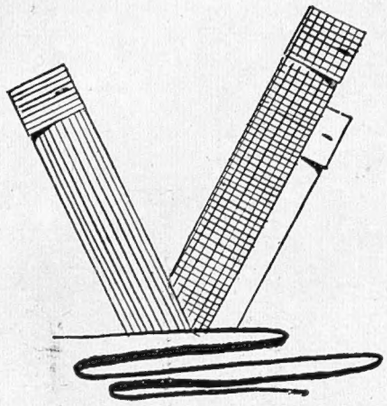

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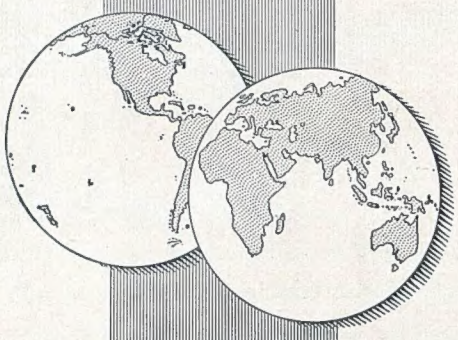

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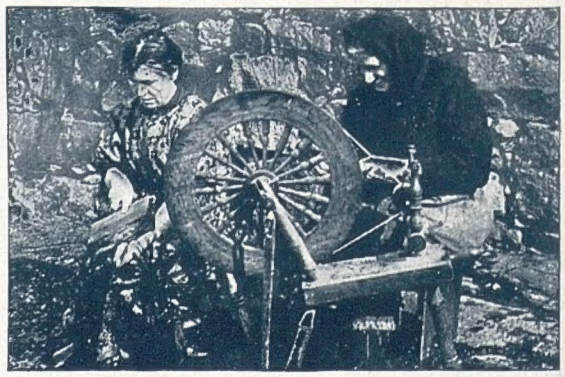

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